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# History of Methodism in Texas

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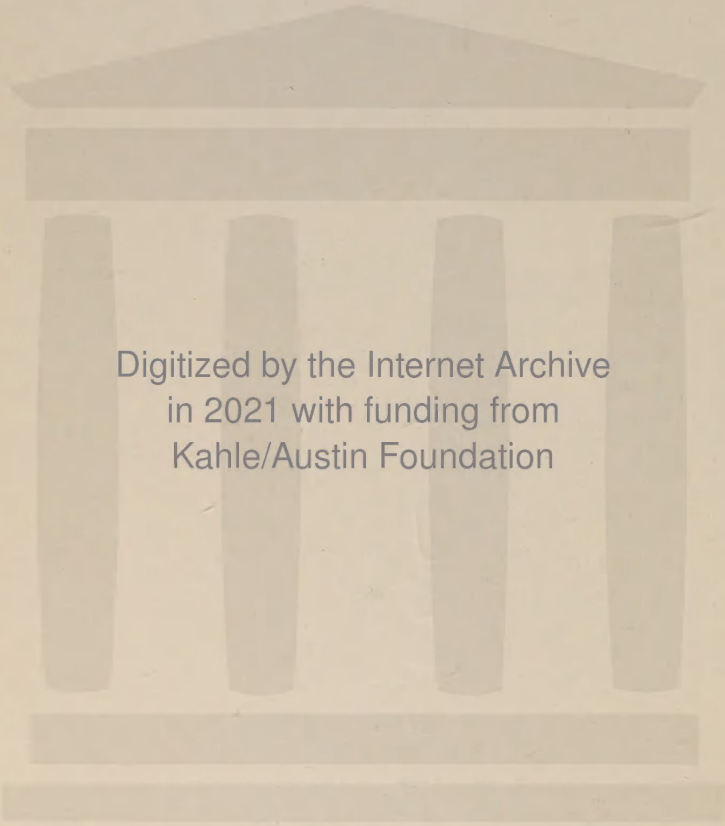
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## EARLY METHODISM IN TEXAS





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A HISTORY  
OF  
EARLY METHODISM IN TEXAS  
1817-1866

BY  
MACUM PHELAN

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TO  
MY WIFE

FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS AN INCONSPICUOUS BUT A  
COMPLETE AND SYMPATHETIC SHARER OF THE  
LIFE OF A METHODIST ITINERANT





## PREFACE

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THE writer of the following chapters first became interested in the subject of which they treat in 1917, when some sporadic efforts were made to celebrate the centenary of Methodism in Texas. A plan was formulated by a historical committee, organized at Dallas, which provided that each pastor should collect and have recorded in his church conference minutes the history of his own local church; each presiding elder should collect and put upon his district conference minutes the history of his district; and the secretary of each annual conference was requested to collect and place in his records the history of his conference. The plan was an admirable one; but, like all previous plans set on foot for collecting and preserving our history, it met with but little response. The writer was then on the Vernon district, Northwest Texas Conference. With no interest whatever in the subject, but recognizing the value of the plan, he undertook to follow it out. He discovered that the history of the Vernon district was for many years the history of the whole of Panhandle Methodism, and in tracing it out he became deeply interested in the research. His investigations led him into other sections of Texas, and at length he opened up correspondence with some of the older men of the Church, with a view of arranging for some concerted effort toward the preparation of a complete history of Methodism in Texas. He found very little interest in the subject and but little encouragement, further than the general response that "it ought to be done."

Led, then, only by his own growing interest in the subject, the writer set out to make at least a beginning in this field. The present volume is offered as that beginning.

The materials covering the early period of our history have been gathered from various sources. In the summer of 1918 the writer came into possession of the collection of books and papers left by Oscar M. Addison, one of our pioneer preachers, and a man of decided literary and antiquarian habits. A voluminous correspondence carried on with the preachers and others of his day, covering a period of fifty years from about 1839, and all of which had been preserved, formed the most valuable part of this collection from a historical viewpoint. A liberal use has been made of these old letters and miscellaneous records in the present volume.

All of the old files of the *Texas Christian Advocate* now in existence have been examined, page by page, and almost item by item, and these have been drawn upon to a very considerable extent. References are made to this source from time to time in the following pages, and for the sake of brevity usually the initials only of this periodical (T C A) are used.

The Rev. E. L. Shettles, of the Texas Conference, a book collector of the widest knowledge and activities, has been the writer's most helpful advisor in the field of literature bearing upon Texas Methodist history, and he has been generous beyond words in supplying much rare material needed in preparing this volume.

The writer, and all future writers on Texas Methodist history, must acknowledge a debt to the "History of Methodism in Texas," by Homer S. Thrall, D.D., first published in brief form in 1872, and in a somewhat larger edition in 1889. The greatest fault of this work is its brevity. Thrall lived through most of the early period of our history, and he had peculiar advantages in personally knowing all the important persons and facts of

those days, and he might have collected a vast storehouse of historical material. But in his book he gives us only the outlines of this great period. His collection of materials was evidently far from complete, as he was much given to devoting pages to unimportant details, and paragraphs, or only sentences, to more important events. He was careless, or poorly informed, in the statement of many facts and dates. But let it be said to his everlasting credit that he wrote and published much of what he knew of contemporaneous Methodist history, which but few of the makers of our history have done. The present writer gladly acknowledges his debt to this pioneer volume, and due credit is given herein when use is made of it.

The selection and arrangement of the materials which he has been able to command has been made according to the writer's own plan. The most painstaking regard for facts and figures, for names and dates, has been exercised, but prominence has been given to the human side of the story; and the purpose has been to make this book something more than a mere transcript of conference minutes. The conditions—political, natural and moral—under which the Church was planted in Texas, the problems and struggles of our pioneers, stories of their failures and of their triumphs—all these are given a large place in this record. So far as possible the author has let the makers of our history speak for themselves and in their own way. This method he has thought adds to the interest of the subject in hand, and besides, he has felt that when our pioneers have written on matters of present historical interest, *they* are entitled to be heard, rather than some one else who might give only his version of their report.

The time and labor involved in sorting and comparing and organizing the materials in hand have been such as only those who have done similar work can appreciate. It looks simple and easy enough—after it is finished.

The field is a large one, and the present volume by no means pretends to exhaust it. And after all these years of unremitting search for facts, and after all the care exercised in their use, the writer admits it as possible that some future historian, more expert in these matters, may give the present work a "going over" and be able to point out numerous omissions and faults.

May 1, 1924.



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# A HISTORY OF EARLY METHODISM IN TEXAS

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## CHAPTER I

### AMERICAN SETTLEMENT AND EARLY CONDITIONS

It was not until after the Louisiana purchase in 1803, whereby the United States suddenly expanded and became the big next-door neighbor of the Spanish territory on the southwest, that the wide domain called Texas began to slowly emerge from its long obscurity. On an old map of North America, published in the United States near the beginning of the last century, the name Texas appears in the neighborhood of the present commonwealth of that name, but the scant features of the country which are shown were evidently filled in by the imagination of the geographer. Before the period of American expansion, and the coming of the first American adventurers and prospectors, the history of Texas is a long dreary story of neglect and failure on the part of its Spanish claimant. Some efforts had been made by Spanish ecclesiastics to subdue and christianize the native Indian population. Missions were established at an early day, and about these had gathered small communities of soldiers and settlers. But the first American visitors found but three of these settlements in Texas; namely, Nacogdoches in the east, first settled in 1716, restored in 1779 as an outpost against French aggression from Louisiana; LaBahia (Goliad) in the southwest, founded

in 1749; and San Antonio de Bexar, founded in 1718. The "Old San Antonio Road," running from the Rio Grande to Nacogdoches, which became a landmark in the subsequent development of the country, had been marked out. On the wide coastal expanse, fronting on a busy world of migration and trade, not a permanent settlement had been made, and no commercial ships ever put in to the Texas shores.

It was only, then, after American influence had begun to be felt that Texas history has any interest for us, for it is among the first American settlers that we shall find the beginnings of the special history which we have set out to trace. In 1800 the population of the United States had passed the five million mark. The energetic and restless frontiersmen already wanted more elbow room, and they were pressing upon the Mississippi and looking **with longing eyes upon the vast unexplored regions beyond.** The immediate demand was not so much for more land, however, as for unrestricted use of the great river whose outlet was in the hands of a foreign power. Spain, which had held the Louisiana territory since 1762, had begun to feel the pressure of the American prospector, and in 1800 retroceded Louisiana to France, with the stipulation that it should not be transferred to any other power. Formal delivery of possession to France was delayed until 1803, and only twenty days after France had come into possession, Napoleon sold the vast territory to the United States, over bitter protest from Spain. The Spanish forces, which had not yet been withdrawn from the lower Mississippi, sullenly retreated westward only under the steady pressure of the advancing American.

A long-standing dispute between France and Spain over the boundary between the Louisiana territory and the Spanish claims on the west was inherited by the United States when Louisiana was acquired. France had contended that her territory extended to the Rio

Grande, and on the basis of this claim American forces were set in motion, soon after the Louisiana purchase, toward Texas. Troops of the opposing Spanish claimant were encountered near the Sabine, and a clash seemed imminent. Bloodshed was averted by an agreement reached between the respective commanders to set aside a "neutral ground," to be occupied by neither side until the boundary question should be settled. Negotiations over this boundary dispute dragged on for years. Meanwhile all the territory adjacent to Texas was being rapidly settled up. Louisiana was admitted as a state in 1812. Arkansas territory was set off, and the Indian territory set aside as a reservation for the Cherokee and other Indian tribes. Indians and white settlers crossed over Red River from the north and established themselves in Texas, on the assumption that they were still on American soil, as the United States claimed Red River and its watershed on both sides. The Neutral Ground on the east became a refuge for many lawless characters from the States and a rallying ground for various expeditions into Texas. The Spaniards were again—and on their last frontier—feeling the weight of the American tide.

In 1819 the historic treaty was concluded with Spain, by which the United States acquired Florida, but conceded much to Spain in the west, relinquishing all claims west of the Sabine. In the meantime the Mexican provinces had revolted against the mother country, the first blow having been struck for independence in 1810. In 1821 the Spanish power was finally overthrown in Mexico and Texas, being succeeded first by the short-lived "empire" of Iturbide, and in 1824 by the constitutional republic of Mexico. The newly acquired independence of the country, and the reports of the natural resources of Texas disseminated by returned adventurers, awakened a lively interest in the province in many portions of the United States.

Moses Austin, a Missourian, who had gained concessions in that portion of Louisiana territory in 1798, while it was yet under Spanish rule, was attracted to Texas in 1820. He succeeded in obtaining from the tottering Spanish government the privilege of settling in Texas as many as three hundred American families. Austin died in 1821, but before his death committed to his son, Stephen F. Austin, the task of completing the enterprise. Despite the long and toilsome journeys required and the untold hardships endured by the immigrants, to say nothing of the difficulties which Austin himself encountered in having his grant confirmed by the new government which had succeeded to power, the colony was established by the year 1825, the locality selected lying below the San Antonio Road, and "on the waters of the Brazos and Colorado." The first of these American settlers located on the Brazos, in what is now Washington County. Austin's success in this undertaking led him to secure other grants, which provided for the settlement of twelve hundred additional families. The Mexican government opened wide the doors to American immigration, and passed colonization laws providing liberal land grants to the new settlers, and special grants to the "empresarios," or promoters, who should fill their colonies. Under these inducements there were by 1830 as many as fourteen colonization grants in course of settlement, and almost the whole of southern, central and eastern Texas had been allotted in claims. Many of these contracts were only partly filled; some were cancelled or abandoned entirely, while only a few of them were carried to complete success. These new settlers came mainly from various portions of the United States, as the empresarios advertised widely for their recruits; but the Southern States contributed the largest part of the inflow. One or two colonies were partly or wholly settled by native Mexicans, while one contract was entirely filled by Irish immigrants, whence comes the name

San Patricio—the Spanish form of St. Patrick—County. Besides the population settled under the colonial grants, there were numerous independent settlers in eastern and northeastern Texas, and many families intended for the colonies stopped nearer the border, or turned aside and settled elsewhere. This great southwestern drift had planted in Texas by the year 1835 between twenty-five and thirty thousand Americans.<sup>1</sup>

As to the character and condition of these first settlers of Texas, they were a mixed multitude, brought together from nearly every state in the Union, and from every condition of life. There were many adventurers and camp-followers, as well as an element who had left the “States” to escape a criminal or an unsavory reputation. There were professional men—doctors, lawyers, a few teachers and preachers; there were a few soft-souled dreamers and idlers, who were soon lost in the wilderness; there were families of gentle breeding and manners, of education and religion, who readily and cheerfully adapted themselves to the raw conditions of this far frontier. By far the largest element in the new population consisted of honest and industrious planters, who took life seriously, and who had sought a home here in order to better their condition, those who had been slave-holders in the States bringing their slaves with them.<sup>2</sup> And those who had been mechanics, or of other trades, at home here adopted the occupation of farming or stock-raising, as *land* was the one thing which all could easily possess.

Mrs. Mary Austin Holly, one of the early settlers, and an early historian of Texas—a relative she was of the first empresario—reports in 1835 that there existed a “town-building mania”—something which survives

<sup>1</sup> School History of Texas, Barker, Potts and Ramsdell, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> “From the beginning of American immigration into Texas, settlement and slavery went hand in hand. The Mexican government abolished slavery throughout the Mexican states in 1829, but Texas was soon after, at the request of Stephen F. Austin, exempted from the decree.”—Art. S-W Historical Quarterly, XVIII, 42.



with unabated ardor to this day. At the time of the publication of her work the following towns had been settled, or projected—these in addition to the old Spanish settlements, Nacogdoches, Goliad and San Antonio, already noticed: San Felipe de Austin, Brazoria, Columbia, Anahuac, Gonzales, Bastrop, Bolivar, Matagorda, Washington, New Washington, Harrisburg, Galveston, Velasco, Victoria, Liberty, Lynchburg, and Houston. "Houston contains between three and four hundred building lots, and a large quantity of out-land," says the account.

We are, of course, here chiefly concerned in ascertaining as far as possible the state of religion and morals among this early people. If we accept the views of the narrator just quoted, conditions in this regard were almost ideal. Her idyllic descriptions of the country and people are charming to the imagination, but one is led to suspect from a perusal of her work that it was intended mainly as a piece of advertising literature on Texas for circulation in the States. Texas, she says, had been peopled by "the active and enterprising New Englander, the bold and hardy Western hunter, and the high-spirited Southern planter." Their first homes here in the wilderness were built "on the cottage style"; the man with a rifle out after a turkey or deer for his dinner was always "leatherstocking." She knows much of the class of women who rode "fifty miles to a ball, with their silk dresses in their saddle-bags," but her acquaintance with the calico-clad element, who were often put to it to subsist at all, seemed to be slight. For this happy, prosperous and free people their religion was appropriately of the same free and romantic sort, according to our author. Says she:<sup>3</sup>

Texas was not, like New England, settled by Puritans, flying from persecution. It was, however, settled by men who know the

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Holly's "Texas," 1835, pp. 176, 177.

value of freedom of conscience, as well as of civil liberty. They accepted lands from the Mexican government on condition of becoming nominal Catholics . . . and though not *Romans*, they were so far *Catholic* as not to contend for points of faith, and had sense enough not to quarrel about forms and technics. The introduction of protestant preachers was contrary to law, and had it not been so the contests of sectarians would have destroyed the country. Hence all have been silent on the subject of religion, and there is not to this day a church in the colonies. Some have objected to Texas—it is no place for them—there is no religion there. With their bibles in their hands, can they not carry their religion in their hearts and act it out in their lives, where there are none to molest or make them afraid? Can they be insensible to the profusion of good things which heaven, as by a miracle spreads out before them—to the beautiful visions and the still voice, which cries, Rise, Peter; kill and eat?

Mrs. Holly, it is said, was a Unitarian in faith. At any rate it is certain that, whatever use her volume served in inducing people in the States to seek a home here, hers was not a true portrayal of religious conditions and needs in Texas at that day. But, fortunately for Texas, there were other voices raised in the colonies, and other views published abroad, to which consideration will be given in due time.

By the terms of the colonization laws of Mexico, all settlers were required to profess allegiance to the Roman Catholic faith. An interesting reminiscence touching upon this point, as well as illustrating the living conditions of some of the colonists, is here given in part.<sup>4</sup>

We landed at Harrisburg, which consisted at that time of about five or six log houses, on the 3d of April, 1831. Captain Harris had a sawmill, and there was a store or two, I believe. Here we remained five weeks, while Fordtran went ahead of us and selected a league of land. While on our way to our new home, we stayed at San Felipe for several days at Whiteside's

<sup>4</sup> From the Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Assn., II, 227, translated from the German of Caroline von Hinueber by Rudolph Kleburg, Jr.



tavern. The court house was about a mile out of town, and here R. M. Williamson, who was then the alcalde, had his office. . . . S. F. Austin was in Mexico at the time, and Sam Williams his private secretary, gave my father a title to land which he had originally picked out for himself. My father had to kiss the Bible and promise, as soon as the priest should arrive, to become a Catholic.

After we had lived on Fordtran's place six months, we moved into our own house. This was a miserable little hut, covered with straw, and having six sides, which were made out of moss. The roof was by no means waterproof, and we often held an umbrella over our bed when it rained at night, while cows came and ate the moss. Of course we suffered a great deal in winter. My father tried to build a chimney and fireplace out of logs and clay, but we were afraid to light a fire because of the extreme combustibility of our dwelling. So we had to shiver. No one can imagine what a degree of want there was of the merest necessities, and it is difficult for me now to understand how we managed to live and get along under the circumstances. We were really better supplied than our neighbors with household and farm utensils, but they knew better how to help themselves. Sutherland used his razor for cutting kindling, killing pigs, and cutting leather for moccasins. My mother was once called to a neighbor's house, five miles from us, because one of the little children was very sick. My mother slept on a deer skin, without a pillow, on the floor. In the morning the lady of the house poured water over my mother's hands, and told her to dry her face on her bonnet.

At first we had very little to eat. We ate nothing but corn bread. . . . At first we grated our corn, until father hollowed out a log and we ground it as in a mortar. We had no cooking stove, of course, and baked our bread in the only skillet we possessed. . . . The nearest mill was thirty miles off.

The country was very thinly settled. Our three neighbors lived in a radius of seven miles. San Felipe was twenty-eight miles off, and there were about two houses on the road thither. . . .

We lived in our doorless and windowless six-cornered pavilion about three years.

One section of the colonization laws of Mexico, under

which the earlier settlements in Texas were made, contained provision for "a competent number of pastors" for the new settlements; but it appears from the fact that the first colonials were exempted from taxation for a period of six years, an empty treasury at the seat of government did not permit of a plentiful supply of "pastors" in Texas. And with scarcely no priestly oversight, it turned out that the Catholic faith was but slightly observed among the American settlers in Texas, or not observed at all except in compliance with necessary forms of law in perfecting land titles and in other legal transactions. "In the spring of 1831," we are told,<sup>5</sup> "Padre Michael Muldoon was sent to Texas to initiate the generally heretical colonists into the Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church. He was a jovial, good-hearted Irishman. He baptized and remarried such families as assented to the duplicate ceremonies, and such as would not, he kindly let alone. No coercion was used, except the withholding his official certificate, which was indispensable to obtaining any extra concession of land. The prescribed headrights were granted irrespective of, or rather without inquiry into, his priestly ministrations. We know of one gentleman with a family who declined his supererogatory services, on the ground of a precedent administration; but, by doing so, he failed to obtain an augmentation of some five or ten leagues to which he was entitled by the usage in those early times, for a costly improvement then in process of completion."

The following extract, taken from a contemporary source, may be inserted here to throw more light upon the religious and educational conditions which surrounded the early Texans:<sup>6</sup>

Of our educational advantages I cannot boast. Mexico has recently passed two laws: one that a school shall be established

<sup>5</sup> Article on "Early History of Texas," Texas Almanac, 1859.

<sup>6</sup> From a letter written in 1830, given in Pennybacker's History of Texas.

in each division of each State; the other that children shall be taught reading, arithmetic, Roman Catholic religion and a catechism of all the arts and sciences. These laws amount to nothing. We really have no system of education. A few excellent private schools exist. As the country becomes more thickly settled these will increase.

Last week we had the pleasure of entertaining for the night Mr. T. J. Pilgrim, who about a year ago came out to Texas from New York. After many adventures he reached San Felipe de Austin, and was most kindly received by the great empresario, Austin. He at once opened a school, and soon had forty pupils, the most of whom were boys. . . . Mr. Pilgrim also organized a Sunday school, and this, too, was a great success until some trouble arose between a few of the settlers and some Mexicans; the Mexicans, much out of humor, came to San Felipe to settle the matter, and Austin fearing they would report to the authorities that he was violating the law (for, you probably know, we are not by law allowed to teach or believe the Protestant religion, though really I don't believe the officers care), thought best to close the Sunday school.

How often do we attend church? Don't be too shocked when I tell you we heard our last sermon in Virginia. If we wanted to go to church ever so much we could find in this part of Texas no church and no minister. I have heard that in other portions of the country a few preachers, in spite of the laws, do live and hold services; but we have not even a Catholic church anywhere near us. Sunday is spent by most Texans in hunting, fishing, and breaking wild horses. All elections are held on Sunday. Some of us, however, observe the Sabbath, and try to live as if we were still in Virginia.

Evidences will multiply as we proceed that the religious and educational advantages of the Texan pioneers were of the most limited sort, reaching the point of entire destitution in all but a few local instances. The government was over-generous in offering wild land, which cost it nothing, to new settlers; but for the rest they could shift for themselves. Protestant worship was forbidden in the colonies by the terms of the same law which re-

quired the observance of the Catholic faith. The general result was, that no public religious services of any sort were held, though there were occasional neighborhood gatherings for such purposes at private houses. And the Texas colonial settlements present the unique instance perhaps in the history of the English race, of a population of thousands gathered in a new country to make their home, and not a church building or a "meeting house" for public worship among them. The efforts at repression of all Protestant preaching and practice were not entirely successful, as we shall see; but the fact that it was under the ban gave it a sort of "smuggled" character, and made it the more precious for all that to the few who enjoyed it. But the masses of the people, deprived of all the privileges and restraining influences of public worship, and in the freedom and excitement of subduing a new country, drifted into a state of religious indifference and moral carelessness.

But there was a vital leaven at work even then, which came in with the tide of immigration, and which could not be wholly destroyed, and we turn now to consider for our part the Methodist elements and activities among the first settlers of Texas.

## CHAPTER II

### FIRST METHODIST PREACHING AND ORGANIZATION IN NORTHEASTERN TEXAS

THE first American settlements in the province of Texas were made in three distinct localities; namely, in the Red River section of the northeast; in the "Redlands" of the eastern portion; and in the colonial grants, located in south-central Texas. It is in these regions, therefore, that we hear of the first activities of the Methodist preacher. Speaking in ecclesiastical terms, we shall find that it was within the bounds of the present Paris district, North Texas Conference, and in the Nacogdoches and Brenham districts of the Texas Conference that the first preaching and organization of our Church in this state occurred. The earliest of all these settlements was made in the Red River section, and to this region we must look for the first Methodist preaching on what is now Texas soil.

The first settlers on this side of Red River made their appearance there about 1815, before the boundary line between American and Spanish territory had been defined. It had not yet been determined which fork of the river—Red River proper or Sulphur Fork—was the main stream, and as the United States claimed "all the Red River water-shed on both sides" these pioneers from the States assumed that they were still safely within the bounds of their native country.

The first preacher of any denomination to visit these remote settlements was undoubtedly William Stevenson. It has been stated that Stevenson preached on this side



of Red River as early as 1815, "at the house of a Mr. Wright, who had recently moved out from Smith County, Tennessee."<sup>1</sup> This visit must be placed a year or two later. The records of the Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and Mississippi Conferences furnish us with a fairly complete history of Stevenson's ministerial career. He was admitted on trial into the Tennessee Conference, held late in October, 1815, in Wilson County, Tenn., about twenty-five miles east of Nashville. His first appointment was Bellevue circuit, in what was then the Missouri district (all of this territory at that time being included in the Tennessee Conference), Bellevue being located in Washington County, Missouri. All the available data on Stevenson's life show that he had lived east of the Mississippi River up to the time of entering upon his first appointment. It is seen to be out of the question, therefore, to suppose that he could have appeared on Red River in 1815. In 1816 the Missouri Conference was created, embracing all of Arkansas. Two circuits were laid out in Arkansas, one of which was the Hot Springs circuit, embracing all the territory lying south of Arkansas River. On this circuit, at the Missouri Conference in the fall of 1816, William Stevenson was placed, and he was reappointed to the same circuit in the fall of 1817. From certain biographical notes we learn that Stevenson settled in Hempstead County, in southwestern Arkansas, about 1816, and he lived here for about ten years, and the conference minutes show his name in connection with circuits and districts in this region through all these years. These facts furnish a substantial support, therefore, for some accounts of Stevenson's preaching on this side of Red River as early as 1817 and through subsequent years.

The main point of entry into Texas in those days was known as Jonesboro, situated on this side of Red River. Many of the early settlers about that point unite in the

<sup>1</sup> Thrall, *History of Methodism in Texas*, p. 20.

testimony that a Methodist class was formed in Jonesboro in 1817, antedating by several years any other Protestant organization on Texas soil. How long the Jonesboro society existed, or who composed it, there are no known records in existence to show.<sup>2</sup> It has been quite generally stated—by Thrall, Dr. McLean and Andrew Davis—that the leader of this class was named Tidwell, a name associated with one of the early families of Jonesboro which gave us a Methodist preacher by the name of Andrew Davis. Andrew Davis was born at Jonesboro, the son of Daniel Davis by a second marriage. Daniel Davis settled at Jonesboro in 1818 with a first wife, whose name was Tidwell. Our Jonesboro class-leader, then, was probably a brother or other near relative of the first wife of Daniel Davis.

Jonesboro nowhere appears in the minutes of the conferences of that day, and as the name soon dropped out of use there is some uncertainty as to the exact location of the place. Andrew Davis, a native of the village, says that the place now called Pecan Point on Red River was the old Jonesboro of his nativity. He ought to know. But others, among whom were the McKenzie's, who came in a later day to that region, say that the present village of Davenport on Red River is the successor of Jonesboro. The Methodists of that country should settle this question, and mark the spot.

Pecan Point—whether the same as the present Pecan Point on Red River we do not know—appears in the minutes in 1818. In that year the following appointments were made: Black River district, William Stevenson, presiding elder; Hot Springs circuit, Washington

<sup>2</sup> Our knowledge of this Jonesboro society and of the date of its organization is furnished mainly by James Graham, an early day preacher. Dr. John H. McLean informed the writer that he had known Graham; that he had such information from him, and had been in possession of Graham's papers and letters until they were turned over to Thrall. A letter to the writer from John T. McKenzie, of Clarksville, says that he himself had the fact and the circumstance of the Jonesboro class from an old lady who was one of the first settlers of the place.



Orr; Mount Prairie and Pecan Point, William Stevenson and James Lowrey. In 1819 we have: Black River district, William Stevenson, P. E.; Arkansas circuit, Washington Orr; Mt. Prairie, Wm. Stevenson; Pecan Point, Thomas Tennant. In 1820: Arkansas district, Wm. Stevenson, P. E.; Pecan Point, Washington Orr; Hot Springs circuit, Henry Stephenson. So, besides Stevenson, other preachers who labored through this early period in this region were Henry Stephenson, Washington Orr, James Lowrey and Thomas Tennant. Of the last two we know nothing. Of Henry Stephenson we shall have much to say hereafter. Washington Orr was a useful preacher in this section from 1818 to 1823, when he located and removed to Missouri, where he died in 1853. A brother, Green Orr, was one of the first settlers on this side of Red River, and for twenty years he labored in that country as a local preacher. He subsequently removed to Indianola, on Matagorda Bay, where he died.

William Stevenson, the forerunner and leader of this early company of Methodist preachers who labored in southwestern Arkansas and northeastern Texas, was not only the first preacher to enter Texas, but he was the first regular itinerant to enter and preach in Arkansas as well.<sup>4</sup> He was the pathfinder for all the southwestern frontier of Methodism. Born in a frontier settlement of South Carolina in 1768, his long life of eighty-nine years was spent along the outposts of settlement and civilization in the west and southwest. His parents belonged to the Presbyterian Church, in which he was baptized in infancy. At the age of twenty-four he removed to Tennessee. Here he was converted, at the age of thirty-two, joined the Methodists, and soon thereafter was licensed to preach. He labored as a local preacher with a good degree of success in the great revival which spread over Tennessee, Kentucky, and other regions during the early years of the last century. As we have seen

<sup>4</sup> Jewell's History of Methodism in Arkansas.

he was admitted on trial at the session of the Tennessee Conference in October, 1815, and sent at once into the wilds beyond the Mississippi. We have already given some account of his labors during the years following his settlement in Arkansas. In 1820 he was elected a member of the first Arkansas territorial legislature, and was chosen speaker of the house, but this office he resigned on account of indisposition.<sup>5</sup>

About the year 1826 Jesse Haile came on the Arkansas district as presiding elder. He was an ultra-abolitionist on the slavery question, and sought literally, and sometimes harshly, to enforce the rule then standing in the Discipline making a slave owner ineligible to hold official position in the Church, and requiring traveling preachers who might come into possession of slaves to emancipate them, or forfeit their ministerial standing. Haile's outspoken views and his administration of the Discipline on this point produced much excitement and resentment in the church, and as a consequence many substantial Methodist families removed from this territory into northwestern Louisiana. Among them came William Stevenson and Henry Stephenson, though these preachers did not own slaves, and were not themselves victims of the "Haile storm," as this disturbance was long afterwards called.<sup>6</sup> This new community of Methodists, now living within the bounds of the Mississippi Conference, was soon afterwards visited by a presiding elder and a traveling preacher in connection with that conference; a camp meeting was held, a new circuit was formed, called Nachitoches circuit, and William Stevenson placed in charge. The following year Stevenson transferred his membership from the Missouri to the Mississippi Conference, and he continued his relation to that conference until the creation of the Louisiana Conference in 1846, when his membership fell into that

<sup>5</sup> Jewell, History of Methodism in Arkansas.

<sup>6</sup> J. G. Jones, History of Methodism in Mississippi, II, p. 110.

body. Thus he was successively a member of the Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi and Louisiana Conferences—admitted to the first, cut off in the second, transferred to the third, and cut off in the last. He labored in northwestern Louisiana, on circuits and districts, not far from the Texas border, during which time we know that he made at least one preaching tour into Texas. A son, James P. Stevenson, entered the itinerancy in Louisiana, and, as we shall see, preached in eastern Texas, and later removed into the state. William Stevenson took the superannuate relation in 1840. He died in Claiborne parish in 1857, in his eighty-ninth year and in the forty-fourth of his ministry, universally loved and revered. A brief note in the *New Orleans Christian Advocate* of that year, announcing his death, says:

The venerable William Stevenson, a superannuate of the Louisiana Conference, died 5th Feby. at the house of his son-in-law, Major Dyer, in Claiborne parish, in his 89th year. He was a pioneer preacher, and the history of Methodism west of the Mississippi is more bound up in his life and labors than perhaps any other man's. He had prepared large biographic notes which we had six months ago the promise of for use. For several years he has been almost deaf and blind, waiting with patience till his change come. He was born in South Carolina; was converted June 1, 1800; ordained deacon in 1813 by Bishop Asbury. He was indeed a patriarch in piety as in years. After being speechless three or four days, he raised his shrunken hands, smote them feebly together and said, "Heaven's just up yonder; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," then died.

We feel that we are not devoting too much space to this pioneer of the southwest; for while Stevenson never made his home or found a grave in Texas, he cannot be regarded as an "outsider." He was not only the first Methodist preacher to travel over what is now Texas soil, but for more than a quarter of a century his labors were upon or about our borders, and there can be no doubt but that scores of our first Methodist families had

received the impress of his ministry before entering Texas. Stevenson is described by a fellow-laborer in the Mississippi Conference<sup>7</sup> as "a small man, compactly built, lithe and active, and capable of great endurance; with rather a small face, long nose, and a natural or accidental defect in the upper lid of one eye, by which the ball was about half obscured, which gave him, when quiet, a sleepy appearance. When in a state of repose there was nothing in his countenance to indicate his superior intellectuality but the luster of his quick, flashing and penetrating eye. He had not the shadow of a doubt as to the truth of the glorious and awful doctrines of the gospel, and he preached in view of the final results of the gospel scheme both to those who received it and those who rejected it. In all his public exercises he was short and direct. In his prayers, exhortations and sermons there was nothing redundant on the one hand, while on the other there was no deficiency. The most listless and captious hearers could not justly complain at the length of his prayers or sermons, and they could not be uninterested. He was a sharp-shooter, and everybody was apt to be hit somewhere who came within the range of his gospel missiles. He was in the proper sense a revivalist. He was, with his excellent wife, industrious and economical in his domestic affairs, and always seemed to have a comfortable living; but devoting himself so exclusively to the work of the ministry, mostly in new countries, he passed through his long life with but little property."

Dismissing then our honored brother, except for a few incidental references, we return to consider another matter or two bearing upon Methodist foundations in northeastern Texas. The work in this region was for many years—until 1844 in fact—a remote extension of Arkansas Methodism, and beyond a few items which may be gathered from the conference minutes the records

<sup>7</sup> J. G. Jones, *History of Methodism in Mississippi*, II, p. 156.



covering this period are extremely meager. In addition to the preaching and organization at Jonesboro, we are told that "in 1817 William Stevenson and Henry Stephenson preached on Sulphur Fork of Red River," and that preaching was afterwards kept up there.<sup>8</sup> But several years elapsed before the efforts of the first preachers in this rude wilderness appear to have yielded permanent results. The sparseness and roving disposition of the population, their freedom from legal restraint, together with the natural difficulties of the country, united to make this an unhopeful field. "Jonesboro was a hard place," writes John T. McKenzie,<sup>9</sup> "and its citizens were the same. In talking with an old lady who lived there for several years, and who was well acquainted with the old settlers of that community who have long since 'passed over the river,' she informed me that they told the preacher he must come back no more to preach, and if he did they would nail him up in a barrel and throw him into the river."

Besides the difficulties already noted, the Indian was then in the land, and the frequent incursions of the wilder tribes from the west made permanent settlement and a stable society a matter for future years. Andrew Davis, who was born at Jonesboro in 1827, and who spent his youth in that region, says in his autobiographical sketches:<sup>10</sup>

My father came to Northern Texas and settled in Jonesboro in 1818. The settlers were few in number, and like all new countries, in a wholly unorganized condition, which made them an easier prey than they would otherwise have been. These Indian troubles caused my father to make a number of hasty moves. The community at Jonesboro was one well-nigh broken up. Many left there, some going to Arkansas, and others to

<sup>8</sup> J. P. Sneed, a contemporary member of the Mississippi Conference, in historical sketches written out and found among his papers.

<sup>9</sup> In a letter to the author.

<sup>10</sup> Written out by Davis in later life, but never published. Kindly loaned to the author by his daughter, Mrs. A. Laswell, Waxahachie, Texas.

Nacogdoches and San Augustine. . . . A Mr. Trammel was the first man to move his family from this Red River country prior to 1825 to Nacogdoches. There had never been a road prepared that a wheeled conveyance could pass from one section to the other. Mr. Trammel, with chopping axes and hatchets, cut out a road from Pecan Point, or Jonesboro, to the East, so that pack horses could pass over it.

That settlements were "few and far between," even up in the thirties, is indicated from the fact that when General Houston came to Texas in 1832, "he crossed Red River at Jonesboro,"<sup>11</sup> and proceeded from there to Nacogdoches, seeing but two houses on the way."<sup>12</sup>

We have given a sketch or two in the preceding chapter illustrating the rude conditions under which the first settlers in Austin's colony lived. As a companion piece, portraying conditions on Red River in the earliest days, we will add the following from Andrew Davis:

I was not born in a mansion. The home was, with all its surroundings, of an humble character. A neighbor of my father's at the time of my birth described the place to me after I was a grown man. He said the house was a double-hued log house, with a ten foot entry between the rooms. The floor was of puncheons, laid down out of hewed timbers. All the houses were covered with boards rived from the oak timber of the country. The fire places were from three to six feet wide, and deep enough that large logs could be piled in them, making log fires. The cracks in the houses were first closed up with wood, over which clot boards were nailed on the outside, and the cracks were daubed with mortar. The doors and window shutters were made of boards. The windows were protected with a kind of

<sup>11</sup> An item of interest from Davis's reminiscences: "My father was almost the first man to see General Houston on Texas soil. I feel warranted in saying that my father's house was the first house that General Houston entered in Texas. The information I have on this point is directly from Houston. I filled the pulpit in Huntsville a term just before the Civil War, and was frequently at General Houston's house. When he found out that I was a native of Texas, and born at Jonesboro, he said, 'Are you a son of Daniel Davis?' I told him I was. He then said that he rested at my father's house eight or ten days after crossing Red River."

<sup>12</sup> Thrall, History of Texas, p. 556.

clarified raw-hide that admitted light into the rooms much better than anyone would imagine. The yard was large, with but little shrubbery, enclosed with an old-fashioned rail fence. This was the best character of homes in the early day. Most of the houses had dirt floors, and beds were often upon forks driven in the ground, on boards placed upon the poles. I have slept on such a bed-stead myself in my frontier ministry, back in the forties. Some people had feather beds; others used mattresses of the most common character, and all the under beds were made of the better quality of prairie grass. . . .

My apparel was of course common character. The pantaloons were generally made of buck-skin, and also the vest and coats, or rather hunting shirts, for they were more common than coats. As time advanced the people began to make looms for weaving a coarse kind of cloth. The spinning wheel and cards came into use. The women made a coarse kind of cotton and woolen cloth, which began to take the place of buck-skin clothing. As to shoes, they were not to be had at all. A moccasin after the fashion of those worn by the Indians was common. I never wore a shoe until I was nine or ten years old. . . . The nearest place for supplies, both as to clothing and groceries, was Calafabra (now Camden), on White River, Arkansas. The living, therefore, was mostly on wild animals, beef and some kind of hominy; and sometimes the hominy was not to be had because the corn was not in reach.

We shall take leave of this region for the present, which is as yet little better than a wilderness and a solitary place, to consider Methodist beginnings in other portions of Texas; but we will return in later chapters, to find conditions improving and Methodism taking root in the Red River country.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODIST BEGINNINGS IN EAST TEXAS

WHEN we come to consider Methodist foundations in East Texas we at once meet the names of Stevenson and Stephenson, with which we became familiar in the last chapter. These pioneers have been often confused in published historical sketches, and the inference has been drawn that they were brothers, due to the similarity of their names and to the fact that they were contemporaries and labored much together in the same fields. But they were of different families; they spelled their names after the forms used herein, and there is no evidence whatever that they were related. We have given an outline of the life of William Stevenson, in which it was noted that he was born in South Carolina in 1768. Henry Stephenson was born in Virginia in 1772, and, like Stevenson, of Presbyterian parentage. At the age of twenty he emigrated with the family to Kentucky, and later to Missouri, locating near the present town of St. Charles. Stephenson was soon thereafter converted and entered the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was licensed to preach by Jesse Walker in 1812. After his marriage he removed to Arkansas, first to Lawrence County, and in 1817 to Hempstead County. Here for the first time he came in contact with William Stevenson, and henceforth they are associated much together in pioneering for Methodism in the southwest. They removed with their families together into northwestern Louisiana in 1826, and after that time we



are to become much better acquainted with Henry Stephenson.

As to which one of these preachers was the first to lift his voice on this side of the Sabine we cannot positively determine. There is some respectable testimony to the effect that William Stevenson visited and preached in the old town of Nacogdoches in the year 1817, while still a resident of Arkansas, the year being the same that marks his entry into northeastern Texas. Joseph P. Sneed, who was one of the first regular preachers to labor in Texas, leaves on record this item: "William Stevenson preached in Texas in the old stone house at Nachitoches in 1817, while traveling Nachitoches circuit, accompanied by Rev. Joseph Reed, who died in Hempstead county, Ark." Before examining this scrap let us add another from a different source, which seems to confirm the main point. James P. Stevenson, a son of William Stevenson, lived through his later years in Stephens County, Texas, and died there in 1885. From *The Texan*, published at Breckenridge in that county, we have a clipping giving a sketch of Stevenson's life and something about his father, based upon information obtained from Stevenson himself. The story was written during Stevenson's lifetime, and is signed by Wm. W. Schermerhorn. The following is extracted from the article:

In 1817 William Stevenson, a Methodist minister, preached at the village of Nacogdoches to a mixed assemblage of citizens and Mexicans, who received the American priest by reverently kissing his hands in homage to his holy office. The strange priest departed, and the event, which may for a time have been theme for comment in the barracks and around the rude hearthstones of the pioneers, gradually faded from memory from those who had listened to the strange songs of praise.

In the Sneed account the names of places are a little mixed, he evidently having confused Nachitoches, La., and Nacogdoches, Texas. And the record is plainly

against his statement that Stevenson was on the Nachitoches circuit in 1817. The minutes list him during that year as on the Hot Springs circuit, Arkansas. The Rev. Joseph Reed, or Reid, mentioned by Sneed as having accompanied Stevenson to Nacogdoches, we have been able to identify as a local preacher in southwestern Arkansas, and this is a circumstance in favor of the truthfulness of the account. The account from Stevenson's son in the Breckenridge paper appears to be authentic and clear on the main point. Still, after taking into account all the circumstances which seem to favor accepting the item as historical, we must say that the probabilities are strongly against it, when we consider the distance from Stevenson's home, in Hempstead County, Arkansas, to Nacogdoches, the greater part of it a trackless wilderness lying in an unknown and a foreign country. The fact that Stevenson first preached in Texas in 1817, and that in 1827 he *was* on the Nachitoches circuit in Louisiana, in close proximity to the Texas border, and could have easily made the visit alluded to in the latter year—such a combination of dates and circumstances could have given rise to the tradition recorded above.

Another instance of early preaching and work in East Texas which has been advanced may be referred to here, although we have been unable to uncover more evidence than that submitted, or to arrive at more of the details. This relates to James English, a Methodist local preacher, who is said to have settled in Shelby County in 1825. In a letter from a later relative, but himself an old timer of Shelby County,<sup>1</sup> it is declared that English "was the first minister of the Church to enter what is now Shelby county; he preached the first sermon, organized the first church, and built the first church house here. He was a faithful servant of the Master, and highly respected among all classes of people here. He located here in 1825 and remained here many years. He

<sup>1</sup> James W. Truitt to E. L. Shettles, dated Sept. 30, 1915.

had a very large and influential family, being the eldest of six brothers, two of whom, Joshua and Jonas English, married two sisters, Candace and Martha Todd, who were sisters of my mother, Susan Todd, all of whom were well known to the old timers who are still surviving here." We find the name of James English mentioned once in the records left by some of the later preachers who labored in this section, referring to him as assisting in a revival held in 1834; but we have seen no reference anywhere to the church he is said to have organized, or to a church house credited to him.

Henry Stephenson, while serving a circuit in Louisiana, held a camp-meeting on the Texas border in 1829, probably on the Louisiana side, but many neighboring Texans attended this meeting. We have no further notice of preaching in this section until 1832, when Needham J. Alford, a Methodist local preacher residing in Louisiana, preached at San Augustine, Texas, and on the site of the present town of Milam. To J. P. Sneed we are indebted for an account of Alford's preaching, as to him we are also indebted for many other incidents of our early history. No one had better opportunity of knowing the facts. Says Sneed, referring to the events of 1832:<sup>2</sup>

The first protracted or camp meeting held in East Texas was near the town of Milam, Sabine county, on the old King's highway at a little branch. The meeting was appointed for Nedon J. Alford and Bro. Turner [Sumner] Bacon, a colporter sent out by the Natchez Tract and Sunday School society of the O. S. P. Church [Old School Presbyterian]. The meeting was held by Bro. Alford, probably better known as the Bull-dog preacher. He was a Methodist preacher living in Louisiana, about twelve miles from the Sabine river on the road. As soon as the meeting was appointed it met with opposition from a Mr. Gomez Gaines, who owned the ferry on the Sabine, and who as an officer of Spain [Mexico] thought it his duty to oppose it, but

<sup>2</sup> Article T. C. A., 1860.

especially by a Mr. Johnson who appeared on the ground before the preacher, Bro. Alford, arrived, with a long cow whip in his hand, declaring that he would whip the first man who entered the stand. Bro. Alford arrived in the midst of the confusion and threats, and was met by Jesse Parker an old friend who had known him from a boy. He walked up to him as soon as he arrived and said, "Nedom, I am glad to see you, I was afraid you would not come." During the conversation one of his sons came up and said, "Pa, Mr. Johnson says that the first man that goes into the stand I will put him out and whip him with my cow whip." On hearing this Bro. A. replied, "I am as able to take a whipping as any man on this ground—I'll go on to the stand and see if he'll pull me out and whip me." So he walked in and looked over on Johnson, who soon left the ground, and died soon after. Bro. A. preached with power. The meeting continued till Sunday night. Immediately after the commencement of the meeting the commander at Nacogdoches, Col. Piedras, was informed of it. He asked if they were stealing horses. The answer was "No." Are they killing anybody? No. He then replied, "Let them alone," and from that day there was no more opposition to Protestant preaching in that section of the country.

We are not to infer from Brother Sneed's direct way of disposing of the bully Johnson that he died at once, from shock produced by Alford's accepting his challenge. But at any rate we have the assurance that Johnson is dead. His threatenings, however, or the hostile attitude of the ferryman Gaines, seemed to lend caution to the next preacher who came the following year.

In 1833 East Texas received its first visit from a regular preacher, in the person of James P. Stevenson, then serving on the Nachitoches circuit, Louisiana. Stevenson's preaching tours and the work that was done on this side of the border that year are well authenticated, as we have not only his own account, but this is corroborated, on the facts which follow, by Joseph P. Sneed, a contemporary.<sup>3</sup> In May, 1833, Stevenson

<sup>3</sup> Stevenson's account from article in Breckenridge *Texan* and sketch in T. C. A., 1880. Sneed's account contained in his papers.



casually met some Texans in a store at Nachitoches, Louisiana, who invited him to preach in Texas. Stevenson replied that he was afraid to undertake it, as he understood that it was a penal offense to hold Protestant services in Texas. The Texans, Lowe and Milton by name, insisted, and the latter, a man of giant frame, gave a full guarantee of protection. "You come," he insisted, "and I'll stand at your back and see you through." In consequence of this interview a two days' meeting was appointed at John Smith's in Sabine County, where Milam now stands, and Stevenson was to preach at the house of Lowe on the Friday preceding. In due time Stevenson crossed over to proceed to his appointments, and true to his word Milton met him and conducted him to the place. A large congregation was awaiting the preacher at Smith's, where he preached without interruption. Col. McMahan, residing some eight or ten miles distant, sent an urgent invitation to the preacher to visit his house and preach on the following Monday, and Stevenson responded, being greeted here by another large congregation. Stevenson thought so well of his reception and of the opportunities in this locality, that before returning to Louisiana he appointed another meeting for the McMahan neighborhood, this time for the 4th of July. At that date he returned and held a three days' meeting, being assisted by local preachers Alford, McKinney and Matthews. He left another appointment for September, and this meeting was on even a larger scale. He was assisted this time by local preachers McKinney, Gordon and Dawdy, the last named having just arrived in the country. On Sunday of this meeting the people insisted on the organization of a church. Stevenson was not willing to leave a church organization as an open and a standing violation of the laws of the country. After some deliberation he organized a "religious society," consisting of forty-eight members, over whom he appointed Col. McMahan as "class-leader."

Stevenson made one more visit to this congregation, this being in October of that year.

It is hardly correct to say that a church was organized at McMahan's in 1833, as Thrall and others state. Stevenson himself says that the organization did not take the name of *church*, and that none of the ordinances or formalities of the church were observed. Sneed did not regard the action taken as amounting to the formation of a church, and he says that after Stevenson left, "the society scattered and never met again." But while no church was formally organized here this year, the material was prepared and the foundation laid for the most historic Protestant church in Texas. There were many conversions at the meetings of 1833, and many of the persons who loosely united themselves in a temporary society became charter members of a regularly organized church which was set up here the following year.

James P. Stevenson, the first itinerant to hold meetings in these woods, was not returned by his conference, and after two years he ceased to travel. He was born in Smith County, Tenn., in 1808, the son of William Stevenson. He was converted under his father's ministry after removal to Louisiana. He attended school for a time at Augusta College, Kentucky, while Dr. Martin Ruter was president of that institution. At the age of twenty-two or twenty-three he was licensed to preach in Louisiana under his father as presiding elder. He was admitted into the Mississippi Conference (which embraced the state of Louisiana) in 1831, and continued in connection with that conference until 1835, when he located and removed into East Texas. He bore arms in the Texas revolution the following year, and after the war he settled down as a farmer and local preacher. In later years he removed to western Texas, locating in Stephens County. He died near Breckenridge in 1885, in his seventy-eighth year.

Early in 1834 Henry Stephenson was placed in charge

of all the work in Texas. His appointment, with that of a colleague, Enoch Whatley, appears as Sabine circuit, in Louisiana (embraced in the Mississippi Conference); but Stephenson was instructed by his presiding elder to spend one-half of his time in Texas. In the spring Stephenson made a journey into Texas as far as the Colorado River, and again in the fall he returned to that section and assisted in a camp-meeting in Austin's colony, which will be noticed in the next chapter. In July of this year 1834 Stephenson held a camp-meeting at McMahan's, on the spot where James P. Stevenson had preached the year before. From some recollections written in later life Joseph P. Sneed says of this meeting: "The preachers present at this meeting were Henry Stephenson, Joseph P. Sneed, Uriah Whatley, Enoch Whatley, Jephtha Hughes, James English and a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher, Sumner Bacon. The congregations were considered large and well-behaved. There were several conversions. The society that Bro. James Stevenson formed and never met was scattered. Henry Stephenson formed one and appointed Bro. McMahan leader. This society remains to this day [1873]."

There is a note of certainty about this record, as there is the mark of permanency upon the work done. Stephenson, Sneed and the two Whatleys were all regular traveling preachers of the Mississippi Conference, who had come over in force from their circuits in Louisiana to unite in planting a church in Texas. And that they succeeded is borne out by the long period of subsequent history. The church planted at McMahan's in July, 1834, remained not only until 1873, the date Sneed writes, but it remains to *this* day, the oldest church having a continuous existence in Texas. The spot at which these early meetings were held and where the first church was organized was at the home of Col. McMahan, "which consisted of four cabins enclosing a court in which the

meetings were held." The ground, as described by Stevenson, was "on a high ridge, covered by an open growth of large hickory timber, interspersed with red oak, the opening between the towering forest trees being covered with a luxuriant growth of grass."

While more detailed reference to this church may be made in later chapters, we note now that this congregation completed its first church building in 1839, when the church took the name of McMahan Chapel. This building was displaced by a new one in 1872, and this one in turn gave place to another in 1900, all occupying in succession the same location, and situated on or near the first camp-meeting site. The church is located about twelve miles east of San Augustine, and is now included in "Geneva circuit."

The nestor of Methodism in this quarter was Col. Samuel McMahan, who removed with his family from Tennessee and settled in Texas in 1831, locating about twelve miles east of San Augustine. "While engaged in secret prayer on the bank of Aish Bayou in 1832 he was happily converted," says Thrall. J. P. Sneed thinks that Col. McMahan's was the first conversion in Texas. That it was genuine was amply attested by the work and influence of his life. We have seen that he was appointed the first class-leader of the first permanent church in Texas. A son, James B. McMahan, became a local preacher, and the Colonel himself was licensed to preach by Robert Alexander at the first quarterly conference held in that section in 1837. It is also said that among those brought into the church by his instrumentality were J. T. P. Irvine, Enoch P. Chisholm, and Acton Young, all of whom married daughters of Col. McMahan, and all of whom subsequently became traveling preachers. Col. McMahan died in 1854, and sleeps in the grave-yard near the church which bears his name.

It is recorded that in June, 1834, Henry Stephenson made a preaching tour of San Augustine County, and



organized a church at the house of George Teel, at which "a number of the Teels, Zubers and others joined the Church".<sup>4</sup> Among the others was Miss Eliza McFarland, the first to give her name, who had been a charter member of the first church organized in Monroe, La., and the daughter of a former distinguished family of Cincinnati.<sup>5</sup> She later married Dr. Lawhon, a Methodist local preacher. A daughter of this George Teel married Tom Parmer, a famous Methodist in his day. Parmer first settled after his marriage on Sabine Bay, and Stephenson visited the Parmer home and preached there in 1834. It appears that while the church formed at Teel's antedated by one month the McMahan church, to which more attention has been devoted above, and which dates from July of this year, 1834, yet we have no further account of the Teel organization, and, like the predecessor of the church on the Polygoche, it must have "scattered, and never met again."

At the session of the Mississippi Conference, held at Clinton, Miss., in November, 1834, Henry Stephenson was returned to the Texas field, this time by official appointment to the "Texas Mission." This is the first time that Texas, or any distinctive Texas appointment, appears in the minutes of any conference. It was attached to the Louisiana district, Preston Cooper, presiding elder. The province of Texas had long been looked upon as a great and needy field by the Mississippi Conference leaders, but they had been slow in sending a missionary across the border on account of the prohibitory laws against Protestant worship. But the movement of events in Texas now appeared to be toward revolution and independence from Mexico, and the time seemed opportune to plan a regular mission among that distant people. "Henry Stephenson was more than willing to take charge of this mission," says J. G. Jones, in his

<sup>4</sup> Thrall, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Jones, *Hist. Methodism in Miss.*, II, p. 108.

“History of Methodism in Mississippi.” “For more than a dozen years he had kept his eye and his heart on the establishment of Methodism in Texas. He seemed to feel a providential call in that direction, and kept himself poor in worldly substance by devoting much of his time and labor, mainly at his own expense, to these pioneer preaching excursions.” Stephenson removed to Texas early in 1835 and settled on Cow Creek, a branch of the Sabine, and made this new location his base of operations.

## CHAPTER IV

### BEGINNINGS IN THE COLONIES

THAT Henry Stephenson visited and preached in Austin's colony in the earliest days of its existence—that he was, in fact, the first Protestant preacher to do so—is without question. J. P. Sneed, a contemporary member of the Mississippi Conference, and who subsequently traveled in Texas over much of the country first traversed by Stephenson, says:<sup>1</sup> “Conversing a few days since with Sister Gates, who was the first or second white woman that crossed the Brazos at the Labahia [Goliad] crossing, where Washington now stands, and settled some seven miles below on the bank of the river. Her husband and herself were both members of the Methodist E. Church. The conversation turned on religion in those days, and the privations of the early settlers, which took place in 1822 [that is, the settlement of the Gates's on the Brazos]. This country was then a Mexican province, and continued such up to 1836. No protestants were permitted to enjoy their religious privileges openly or publicly; but Brother Gates and a few others once and awhile united in the service of God. About one year after they had settled an old acquaintance (Henry Stephenson, a Methodist preacher) visited them and preached for them and a few other neighbors, not desiring to let it be known publicly. This was no doubt the first protestant sermon ever preached west of the Brazos.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From MS., evidently prepared for publication, addressed to “Messrs. Editors,” found among Sneed's papers.

<sup>2</sup> The accounts of the earliest preaching in Texas of other denominations, as furnished to Yoakum by representatives of these Churches, is as

It appears from the same account that Stephenson had on this occasion "seven or eight hearers," and that on this journey he visited San Felipe, Col. Austin's new capital, but was not permitted to preach. Thrall names other places at which Stephenson preached on this journey, as follows: James Cummings's, on Cummings Creek; Andrew Jackson's, on Peach Creek; Nathaniel Moore's, on the Colorado; Samuel Carter's, near Columbus; and at Castlemen's and John Rabb's, near San Felipe. John Rabb fixes the date of this visit of Stephenson as June, 1824. The Moore's and the Rabb's had originally settled in the Sulphur Fork country, in north-eastern Texas, and they had known Stephenson there;

follows: "The first Baptist minister who preached in Texas was the Rev. Joseph Bays, who emigrated from Missouri, in company with Joseph Lindley, and preached on Peach creek, on the west side of the Brazos, in 1826. In the latter part of 1827 he removed to San Augustine, where he continued his labors until he was compelled by the Mexican authorities to leave. In 1829 Rev. Thomas Hanks from Tennessee preached at Moses Shipman's on the west side of the Brazos. . . . In 1830 and 1831 Elders George Woodruff and Skelton Allphine emigrated to Texas, and immediately commenced preaching the gospel. A number of Baptists who had emigrated from New York, established in 1829 at San Felipe a sabbath-school—the first in Texas. It was taught by T. J. Pilgrim, then interpreter of the Spanish language in Austin's colony."—Yoakum, *History of Texas*, II, pp. 536, 537. This sabbath school at San Felipe was broken up, at the instigation of the Mexican authorities, as we have seen in a former chapter. Of the Cumberland Presbyterian pioneers, we have the following: "As early as 1828 Rev. Sumner Bacon penetrated as far as San Felipe. He was a native of Massachusetts, had served his period of enlistment in the United States army, and then became a minister of the gospel. . . . He continued preaching in Texas until 1832, when he obtained the appointment of bible agent. He scattered the Word of God from San Antonio to the Sabine. . . . While Bacon and others were preparing to hold a meeting not far from San Augustine, it was understood that certain persons would break it up. Col. Bowie, hearing of it, went to the place where the meeting was to be held, and making a sign of the cross on the ground, informed them that he was captain in those parts, and that the meeting should be held. They knew Bowie, and the meeting proceeded quietly. . . . About the year 1833 Rev. Milton Estill came to Texas, and established the first church of this order, in Red River county—then supposed to be Miller county, Arkansas. In 1836 Bacon organized another church in San Augustine county."—*Ibid.*, pp. 542, 543. The first preaching and organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church occurred at Matagorda and at Houston in 1838, and in the same year the Revs. Hugh Wilson, John McCulloch and Daniel Baker, preachers of the Presbyterian Church, began their labors in Texas, at San Augustine, Galveston and elsewhere.—*Ibid.*, pp. 532, 534. We have, however, the name of Henry Fullenwider, a Presbyterian preacher, appearing in our records as preaching in Austin's colony in 1835.

but in 1821 they removed to Austin's colony, settling on the Colorado. Rabb's account of Stephenson's visit in 1824 is as follows: <sup>3</sup> "In 1824 I was driven by the Indians from the Colorado River to the Brazos, and compelled to remain there one year before I returned. During my stay there, in June, 1824, the Rev. Henry Stephenson made his first visit to Western Texas. I lived or stayed at that time three miles below San Felipe. He came to see me where I was encamped with my wife and one child. There he preached the first sermon ever preached by a protestant minister in Texas, to a party of four families. Col. Austin knew nothing of his preaching until after he had gone."

Whether Stephenson preached first at Rabb's or at Gates's is immaterial. It is certain that he made a considerable preaching tour in these settlements on this visit among the first Methodist families, some of whom he had known on Red River, and to whom he had preached before. Thrall records that Stephenson paid these settlements another visit in 1828 and again in 1830, but we have no account of his preaching on these subsequent visits. In fact we learn that it was quite other business that brought him on his long rides to the west in these latter years. Our account this time is from Lydia McHenry, a member of an early Methodist family in this region, who received her version of Stephenson's visits from the preacher himself during a visit to her home in 1834. This writer <sup>4</sup> says that Stephenson had made two previous visits to the colony for the purpose of "collecting a debt." As he had made *three* journeys before, we are left to infer that, as there is no account of his preaching on the visits of 1828 and 1830, his presence here during these years was on personal business, and is without significance. This writer says that Stephenson

<sup>3</sup> Article, Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, July, 1909, copied from Rabb's "Recollections," published in Texas Wesleyan Banner in 1850.

<sup>4</sup> Texas Christian Advocate, Feb. 16, 1860.



was a very timid man, and not disposed to disregard the advice of the officials of the colony, his caution on this point leading him to refuse to perform a marriage ceremony on one occasion. On a former visit he had met Col. Austin, and discussed with him the subject of missions to Texas, but Austin gave him no encouragement. On the contrary, the empresario had expressed his unqualified disapproval, saying that "one Methodist preacher would do more mischief in his colony than a dozen horsethieves," by which our writer explains that "political mischief" was meant. But there is no evidence that Col. Austin ever displayed any friendly interest toward missionaries in Texas even when the danger of political mischief was past. This cannot be said of some other officials of the colony, as will be noted.

It is not intended to misrepresent the "Father of Texas" in the matter of his prohibiting public religious services in his colony. There is abundant evidence to show that Austin had little personal respect for the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Mexico, and that he deferred to that religion and forbade the public exercise of any other chiefly as a means of keeping the peace. He expressed the hope of ultimately securing complete religious freedom in Texas. It is plain that he regarded the Methodists as especially obnoxious at this time. In private letters he expresses himself on this point as follows:<sup>5</sup>

The Methodists have raised the cry against me, this is what I wished for if they are kept out, or will remain quiet if here for a Short time we shall succeed in getting a free toleration of all Religions, but a few fanatics and imprudent preachers at this time would ruin us—we must show the Govt that we are ready to submit to their laws and willing to do so, after that we can with some certainty of success hope to have our privileges extended.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted by W. S. Red, *The Texas Colonists and Religion*, pp. 77, 80, 81.



I am of opinion that no evils will arise from family or neighborhood worship, or from the delivery of moral lectures, provided it is not done in a way to make a noise about public preaching, so as not to start excited Methodist preachers, for I do say that in some instances they are too fanatic, too violent and too noisy. Moral instruction delivered in that pure, chaste and dignified language and manner with which such instruction ought to be imparted to rational beings, will certainly not be objected to, by the government, on the contrary it will be highly approved of. I give this as my opinion. . . . The subject of preaching must be managed with prudence, for I do assure you that it will not do to have the Methodist excitement raised in this country.

During the ten years following Stephenson's first visit to the west in 1824 the country had been rapidly settling up with American families. Of course many of these had been members of Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and other churches in the homeland, and the more substantial of these families continued to hold, and in some degree to exercise, the faith which they brought with them. It is certain that such families wielded no small influence on the moral life of the communities in which they settled. These families attracted the first preachers who came into the country to the communities where they lived, and thus began to form about themselves the first churches. Mention has already been made of the Gates family, whereas there were three Gates families who were early settlers in Austin's colony.<sup>6</sup> William Gates removed from Arkansas to the Brazos in 1821, arriving at the present site of old Washington in October of that year, and was one of the first of Austin's colonists to arrive on the ground. It may be seen, therefore, that "Sister Gates was the first or second white woman to cross the Brazos" in this locality, as Sneed says. Samuel Gates came with his family soon afterwards, and Amos Gates, a son of

<sup>6</sup> "The Old Three Hundred," L. G. Bugbee, *Quarterly Texas State Historical Assn.*, I, 108; C. C. Crane, "Centennial Address," on Washington county; Obituary of Amos Gates, *T. C. A.*, 1883.

William Gates, arrived on the Brazos in 1824. Coming to the same locality at about the same time as the elder Gates there settled another substantial Methodist family, that of Josiah H. Bell. Bell's land was the first surveyed out in Austin's colony, the first line being run on October 10, 1823, the surveyor being Horatio Chriesman, whom Austin had brought from Missouri.<sup>7</sup> Chriesman was a Methodist by persuasion, and subsequently joined this church. So that it may be said that the first peg driven in Austin's colony was a Methodist peg, so to speak. It is impossible, of course, at this day to pick out all the Methodist families included in the "Old Three Hundred" of Austin's first colonists, or to designate those who came in during the next few years. Some of these will be mentioned in other connections and in later chapters. For the present we can refer to only a few others. The Kerr family settled on Yegua Creek in 1824, and was from the first a center of Methodist influence. A. B. F. Kerr, in later years a prominent member of the Texas Conference, perpetuates the name. In 1830 Alexander Thomson, a brother of Mrs. Kerr, arrived on the Yegua with a company of immigrants intended for Robertson's colony. Thomson had been a steward and class-leader in his native state of Tennessee, and soon after arriving in Texas he "commenced assembling a small company, including his own family and his sister's, Mrs. Kerr's, and some others, on Sunday morning, and holding a prayer meeting, or reading one of Wesley's sermons. This he continued until Texas was visited by regular preachers," says Thrall. A company of families from North Alabama, who settled on the Navidad River in the fall and winter of 1830-31, was composed of Methodists. "It would be impossible to estimate the influence which these North Alabama colonists have exerted upon the destiny of Texas," continues Thrall, who himself became acquainted with many of these and their descendants.

<sup>7</sup> Obituary of Horatio Chriesman, T. C. A., 1878.

“They have occupied distinguished positions at the bar and on the bench, in conventions and legislative assemblies, in the pulpit and on the battle-field. They have especially exerted a wholesome moral and religious influence, not only where they first settled, but wherever they have been dispersed over the country.” Among these families were the Heard, Menefee, Sutherlands and Rectors, and Samuel Rogers, a local preacher—all of whom had been accustomed to filling official places in the Church. And this company made at least one contribution to the itinerancy in Texas—Alexander Sutherland.

There came in also, with the tide of immigration in the earliest days, a few Methodist local preachers and former members of conference, who brought their families to Texas to find a new home and improve their condition. The most of these, moved by the destitution of the settlements into which they had come, began to exercise their gifts here. The first of these who became active in Austin’s colony, of whom we have any notice, was William Medford, who arrived in Texas in 1833. The following account of Medford and his work appears, without signature, in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1856:

The first sermon I ever heard in Texas was delivered by Rev. Wm. Medford, in the spring of 1833, at the house of Widow Kerr, now in Washington county. It was a funeral sermon on the death of the wife of Mr. George Kerr, now of Fayetteville, Fayette county. The house was crowded; the sermon was appropriate.

Mr. Medford had been a member of one of our Annual Conferences (I think Illinois), but having a large family to provide for he was induced by the offer of the Mexican government of a league of land to emigrate to Texas early in 1833. Immediately after his arrival he obtained an interview with Stephen F. Austin, introduced himself as a Methodist preacher, and asked Col. Austin if there would be any objection to his preaching. He first settled himself near Chappel Hill, and opened a school, which he taught five days in the week. His first attempt to

preach was in the log hut in which he taught school. He soon formed a four weeks' circuit, and on his first round he walked. His course was to start on Saturday for his appointment, preach two sermons on the Sabbath, and return early on Monday morning to his school. His four appointments were, first, at his own house; second, at Walker's, on New Year's creek; third, at Cooper's, on Mill creek; fourth, at Clokey's, now known as Madison's, in Washington county. On his second round he was presented with horse, saddle and bridle. Quite a number were awakened and converted under his ministry. He was much more popular in his own immediate vicinity than elsewhere, and no man could command a larger congregation.

He lived to see the church regularly organized, his house a regular preaching place for the circuit minister, and the weekly class and prayer-meeting regularly held at his house up to the day of his death. The first Sunday school in that neighborhood was organized and kept in his house until long after his death.

Medford was from Missouri, and held membership in the Missouri Conference from 1826 to 1830, when he located. In Texas he fell into disrepute in his later years, due to some unnamed improper conduct, according to John Rabb; but he was in a large measure exonerated and forgiven before his death.

There arrived at Washington on the Brazos in December, 1833, a Methodist local preacher and former itinerant who from that day fills a large place in the foundation period of Methodism in that region. This was John Wesley Kenney, who had traveled with his family, accompanied by a talented sister-in-law, Miss Lydia McHenry, all the way overland from Illinois. Kenney was cut out for an itinerant, and for places of distinction in the ministry, being a man of strong physical frame, of unusual mental endowments and gifted as a preacher; but fortune, or rather personal misfortune, had led to his location and removal to Texas. Here he did itinerate, actually and officially, for something like thirty years, and here his talents found opportunity for the widest play.

Kenney was born in Pennsylvania in 1799, two years after his parents had arrived from Ireland. His mother had been converted under John Wesley's preaching. The family removed to Ohio, where young Kenney was converted, and where he began preaching at the age of nineteen. Here he became acquainted with Martin Ruter, the two, as we shall see, coming together again in Texas many years later. Kenney was a successful itinerant in Ohio and Kentucky until he located in 1828. In 1824, while on Fountain Head circuit, under Peter Cartwright as presiding elder, he was married to a daughter of Barnabas McHenry, one of the distinguished preachers of his day. In 1832 Kenney served as captain of a company of militia in Illinois against the Black Hawk Indians.

The town of Washington had been laid out in blocks and streets when the Kenney family arrived in 1833, but not a house had been built, says his daughter, Mrs. A. J. Lee, in her reminiscences of her father.<sup>8</sup> "Captain Hall gave father a lot, on which he soon built a log cabin, the first house in the town of Washington, which afterwards boasted of being the capital of the Republic of Texas. . . . He preached his first sermon at the house of Samuel Gates, not far from Washington, in March, 1834. I remember being at the house. This year he moved twenty-five miles southwest from Washington, and settled on his headright league."

It will be remembered that in 1834 Henry Stephenson, though officially appointed to the Sabine circuit in Louisiana, was instructed by his presiding elder to spend one-half of his time in Texas. He had devoted much labor to East Texas through the summer, as we have noted, and late in August of this year he appears in the west. Soon after Kenney had settled in his new home, in what is now Austin County,<sup>9</sup> Stephenson and Kenney came to-

<sup>8</sup> Published in the Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, July, 1909.

<sup>9</sup> The old Kenney homestead was located four or five miles east of the present station of Kenney on the Santa Fé railroad.



gether there, and, as we should expect, a camp-meeting was soon arranged. We leave it to John Rabb to give us the account of this meeting:<sup>10</sup>

In August, 1834, the Rev. Henry Stephenson again visited Western Texas. He consulted with the Rev. J. W. Kenney on the propriety or impropriety of holding a camp-meeting in Texas. They felt perfectly satisfied, so did all the citizens of Texas, that the general government had dissolved the constitution of 1824; that they were clear of their oath, although not more than one-fourth of the citizens had ever been required to take it. They determined in the name and strength of the Lord Jesus Christ to set up the blood-stained banner, although it was on enchanted ground. They appointed a camp-meeting which commenced on the 3d of September, assisted by the Rev. Mr. Fullenwider, of the old school of Presbyterians, to all appearances a man of God, and two other Methodist ministers, Mr. Babbit and Wm. Medford. . . . On Saturday, the 5th, Father Stephenson preached the 11 o'clock sermon. After he was through he opened the door to receive members into the Church. I thought, what a venture on the devils' territory! The words had hardly passed from his lips before I had him by the hand. There were no others joined that day. I had professed religion about two months before this meeting, on the Colorado, in the woods. On Saturday night and Sunday and Sunday night, some eight or ten professed religion. On Monday morning we were called together, and Bro. Kenney opened the doors to receive members. We were seated together on a bench, eighteen in number. A few joined by letter, but the greater part were converted at that meeting. He then addressed us as the little band, for about thirty minutes, from the 2d chapter of 1st John: "Little children," &c. Our names were then all taken down, and the meeting dismissed, and we scattered to the east side of the Brazos river and to the Colorado. This meeting was held in the upper side of Austin county, on a branch of Caney Creek. I never pass that old camp ground without stopping and getting on my knees and thanking God that he then and there gave me resolution to join his Church.

<sup>10</sup> Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, July, 1909, pp. 81, 82.



On Sunday of this meeting Kenney's daughter, Mrs. Lee, relates that Stephenson preached, and "baptized my younger brother and myself."

We have evidently reached the place where a real foundation is being laid, as to all intents and purposes a Methodist church was formed here on Caney in September, 1834—about two months after the church was organized at McMahan's in East Texas. There are some conflicting reports as to the number of persons who united in forming this first church in the colonies. Rabb says there were eighteen. Thrall says there were thirty-eight names enrolled, and he appends a list which he says was in Kenney's handwriting, dated September 8, 1834.<sup>11</sup> But it is unaccountable how he arrived at his figures, as this list contains only twenty-six names, including those of Kenney and his family. Robert Alexander, who appeared upon the ground here three years later, and in his ministry came to know personally perhaps nearly all the persons who attended this meeting, says:<sup>12</sup> "There were eight or ten conversions, and eighteen joined the church by letters." This would account for the Kenney list of twenty-six names, which was probably composed of eighteen joining "by letters," and the eight or ten who were converted during the meeting, and joining *de novo*.

At this meeting Henry Stephenson, before his departure, was urged to present the great needs of Texas to the forthcoming session of his conference, and it was due largely to his representations that the Mississippi Conference appointed Stephenson to the "Texas Mission" in December following. There is no account of

<sup>11</sup> Thrall, p. 33. The list is as follows: John W. Kenney, Mariah L. Kenney, Lydia A. McHenry, John Rabb, James Walker, Catherine Walker, William Medford, Elizabeth Medford, John Ingram, John Crownover, Amelia Stephenson, B. Babbit, Dudley J. White, Henry Whitesides, Laura J. Whitesides, Rachel Dever, Eliza Alford, Elizabeth Scott, Malinda Bargely, Catherine Bargely, Demaris Stephenson, Priscilla Chandler, Mary Huff, Thomas Bell, Abigail Day, Bethel White.

<sup>12</sup> Historical statement furnished for Yoakum, History of Texas, II, 538.

Stephenson's preaching in the west in 1835. In the fall of that year, pressed by increasing age and infirmities, and the needs of a growing family, together with the unsettled political conditions in the west, Stephenson discontinued his conference relation. He continued to reside in Texas and preached as opportunity offered. We shall note the close of his career in another connection.

In the meantime, in September, 1835, one year following their first camp-meeting, the scattered Methodists on the western border came together again near the same place on Caney for another camp-meeting. This meeting was in charge of John W. Kenney, assisted by Wm. Medford, Wm. P. Smith, a physician and local elder in the Methodist Protestant Church, and Henry Fullenwider. By Dr. Smith's account,<sup>13</sup> there were at this meeting twenty-one tents, or covered wagons, "between 20 and 30 communicants"—the members received the year before—and a congregation of about four hundred persons. The meeting continued from Thursday, September 3, to the following Monday. Fortunately we have a still fuller account of this meeting from a contemporary source, and it is here inserted, as several matters of historical interest are brought out:<sup>14</sup>

The first camp-meeting that I attended in Texas, and the second camp-meeting held west of the Trinity, was in 1835, within a mile of where the first camp-meeting had been held a year previous by Rev. Henry Stephenson, near Caney, Austin county, assisted by Revs. Kenney and Medford. Mr. Kenney resided near the ground, and not only personally superintended the preparing of the ground, but actually with his own hands did most of the work, and on him fell the burden of providing accommodations for strangers. There was a large attentive congregation assembled and the best order was observed from first to last. This meeting was held when the country was in com-

<sup>13</sup> Published in *Western Methodist*, Cincinnati.

<sup>14</sup> From an unsigned article in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1856.

motion in consequence of the disposition evinced by Santa Anna to oppress us, and many were fearful that some might take advantage of the existing state of affairs, as by the Mexican laws we were liable to fine and imprisonment for holding or attending any but Catholic religious services in Texas. Mr. K. had previously consulted with Col. Wm. Travis, Dr. Miller and other leading men, who said, "Go ahead and hold your meeting; we will be there, and we pledge ourselves that you shall not be disturbed," and nobly did they redeem their pledge.

Mr. Kenney was assisted in conducting the meeting by Rev. Wm. Medford, Rev. W. P. Smith, and Rev. Mr. Fullenwider, of the Old School Presbyterian church; and never did any congregation appear to take more interest in hearing the word preached. This was the last time that Col. Travis had the privilege of hearing the gospel preached. At the close of the service the Lord's Supper was administered, and a more solemn, feeling time I never before witnessed. It was truly a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. There were two families who came in ox-wagons over forty miles and brought their provisions with them, and some of them returned home rejoicing in God their saviour.

During the continuance of this meeting, after much consultation, a notice was published from the stand requesting all who had been members of any quarterly conference to meet together at a place designated, for the purpose of holding an informal quarterly Conference. We assembled. Bro. Alexander Thomson, then of Burleson county, was then appointed chairman, and David Ayers secretary. Rev. Messrs. Kenney and Medford presented their ordination parchments and certificates that they were ordained elders in good standing in the Methodist Episcopal church, and Rev. W. P. Smith presented evidence that he held the same relation in the Methodist Protestant church. A resolution was offered that we request Rev. J. W. Kenney to take the pastoral charge of us until such time as we could have regular ministers sent us by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal church. . . . This quarterly conference passed a resolution that we would apply to the Missionary Board of the M. E. church, requesting them to send missionaries to Texas, pledging ourselves to receive whoever they might send, and support them. . . .

Mr. Kenney immediately entered on his laborious work. His circuit was extended west of the Trinity, over nearly all the settled parts of western Texas. He labored faithfully until the invasion of Santa Anna, when he quitted his circuit, shouldered his rifle and went as a volunteer to defend us from invaders.

As this meeting was held, as the writer above notes, under the shadow of the clouds of war fast gathering over the country, it is little wonder that, looking back and remembering the deluge that fell upon the land a few months later, the narrator recalls this as "a solemn, feeling time." In view of certain events of the following year, it is interesting to note the presence here of Col. William Barret Travis; and that his heart was in this cause, as well as in that of securing the freedom of Texas, we have other evidence to submit shortly.

It will be noted that this meeting was held with the express permission of the political authorities then in Texas. Stephen F. Austin was not consulted because of his absence in Mexico. In addition to the interview of J. W. Kenney with the authorities, noted in the record above, Alexander Thomson had also assisted in paving the way for more religious freedom in the province by consulting the political chiefs. "Alexander Thomson . . . visited the Alcalde, Horatio Christman, at San Felipe de Austin," says Dr. Smith in his account. "After a circuitous train of conversation with the Alcalde, with caution and solicitude, Brother T. presented to his consideration the subject of introducing the preaching of the pure gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ into the Province of Texas. Brother Thomson intimated to the Alcalde that it was his opinion that the Mexican Government would not care for any of the Protestant exercises, notwithstanding they might be considered contrary to law. To the high gratification of Bro. Thomson, the Alcalde replied, 'I am much of the same opinion.' Bro. Thomson then remarked, 'If any Protestant preachers come on, I shall open my doors for the

preaching of the gospel.' The Alcalde replied, 'I shall do so, too,'—which he did, and as a blessed consequence resulting from it, the Alcalde and the major part of his family are now happy participants of vital religion, and honorable members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.'" <sup>15</sup>

Mr. Thomson subsequently visited Dr. James B. Miller, the highest political functionary of the Mexican government in Texas, and reported to him the main incidents of the camp-meeting which had recently been held. Among other things he reported that it had been determined to provide for a preacher, John W. Kenney, to make a regular circuit among the settlements and preach to the people, and that his support had been provided for by a popular subscription. Whereupon the chief replied, "You have done wrong, sir; you should have left your subscription open, for some more of us wish to subscribe." The subscription paper was then laid before him, and the chief subscribed twenty dollars. <sup>16</sup>

Of the extent of Kenney's first circuit, or how far he got on his rounds, we have no account. But we know that before many weeks he was interrupted by the commotion resulting from the invasion of the Mexicans. But at that September meeting on Caney another step was taken which is of more historical importance than anything else done there, and which the war did not forestall. That was the action taken looking to the enlistment of the interest and help of the Methodist Church authorities in the United States. That which these loyal and fervent Methodists desired most of all was connection with the great itinerant system which would provide them with regular pastors. We have seen that a "quarterly conference" was organized and held toward the close of the meeting. It was irregular in some important details, to

<sup>15</sup> Communication to Texas Wesleyan Banner in 1850, quoted in Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, July, 1909, pp. 84, 85.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.



be sure, but in spirit and in its results it served the purpose, and is entitled to the honor of being the first quarterly conference ever "holden" within Texas bounds. The attending ministers produced the evidence of their orders, including Dr. Smith, who here entered into affiliation with the Methodist Episcopal Church. The conference made it the special duty of its secretary, Mr. David Ayers, to correspond with Dr. Nathan Bangs, missionary secretary in New York, and to report of his action "at the next quarterly conference." The next conference was appointed to meet at Samuel Gates's in October, but this conference was never held, owing to the rising prospect of war. But Mr. Ayers fulfilled his instructions, and he was joined in his appeal by others who were present at his house in November, when the communications were prepared. Miss Lydia McHenry wrote urgent appeals to the missionary secretary and to others in the United States. Col. Wm. B. Travis, then present at the Ayers home, penned an earnest call for spiritual reinforcements in Texas, which, while not as tragic as his appeal from the Alamo a few months later, yet met with a readier response when published in the United States. We are not in possession of this particular communication from Col. Travis, and can only judge of its spirit and contents from a letter forwarded on the same mission a few months earlier to the New York *Christian Advocate and Journal*, as follows:<sup>17</sup>

San Felipe de Austin,  
Texas, Aug. 17, 1835.

My dear Sir:-

I take the liberty of addressing you from this distant quarter of the world for the purpose of requesting you to receive my name as a subscriber of your widely circulated Advocate. We are very destitute of religious instruction in this extensive fine country, and the circulation of your paper here will be greatly

<sup>17</sup> Published in the N. Y. Ch. Adv. and Journal in 1835. This copy appeared in Texas Christian Advocate, April 4, 1861.



beneficial, in the absence of the stated preaching of the Gospel. Although the exercise of religion in any form is not prohibited here, but is encouraged by the people, yet but few preachers have come among us to dispense the tidings of salvation to upwards of sixty thousand destitute souls. I regret that the Methodist church, with its excellent itinerant system, has hitherto sent the pioneers of the Gospel into almost every destitute portion of the globe, should have neglected so long this interesting country. I wish you would do me and the good cause the favor to publish such remarks as will call the attention of the reverend Bishops, the different Conferences, and the Board of Missions, to the subject of spreading the Gospel in Texas. About five educated and talented young preachers would find employment in Texas, and no doubt would produce much good in this benighted land. Texas is composed of the shrewdest and most intelligent population of any new country on earth; therefore, a preacher to do good must be respectable and talented. In sending your heralds in the four corners of the Earth, remember Texas.

WM. B. TRAVIS.

Col. Travis was evidently speaking of a very recent condition, or of what might be expected in the future, in reporting a state of religious toleration in the province. He also overestimates the population of Texas by several thousand.

Of the effect and results of the various appeals dispatched to the United States we shall see later. But the outlook from another direction for the few scattered Methodists, as well as for all American settlers in Texas, soon became dark enough. Early in March of the following year Col. Travis and his entire outpost guard of nearly two hundred men, which had been stationed at San Antonio, were overwhelmed in their last retreat in the old Alamo mission, and brutally slaughtered by Santa Anna and his invading hosts from Mexico. The story of how this despot came to power, and the details of the policy he had set out to effect in Texas would require too much space to recite here. But the blow that fell at San Antonio, and another that fell a few days later at

Goliad, spread general alarm throughout Texas. While most of the able-bodied men shouldered their guns and hurried to join the army forming under Gen. Sam Houston, women and children and the few men who were left in the settlements hastened to gather all together and set out eastward for safety. The country west of the Brazos was within less than a month almost depopulated and left as a spoil to the invader and the Indian. The "Runaway Scrape," as this exodus of settlers was called, and the military campaign of the Texas revolution ended together by the decisive battle of San Jacinto, April 21, 1836, in which the Mexicans were completely routed and Santa Anna captured. This event brought joy to the distracted country, and cleared the ground for the setting up of the Republic of Texas.

## CHAPTER V

### A CHAPTER OF REMINISCENCES

BEFORE closing our account of the pre-revolution period of Methodism in Texas, we will add a few personal records, illustrating conditions and experiences in the earliest days. The first will be the recollections of Martin McHenry Kenney, a son of John W. Kenney, covering his first school experiences; and though the account takes us into the years following the revolution, the educational situation is shown to be still crude and primitive. "The first school that I remember, though I did not attend it, was in Austin's Colony in 1835," he writes (*Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, I, 285-296).

It was taught by an Irishman named Cahill. My older brother was one of the pupils of that primitive academy. It was distant about two miles from our house, and the way was through the woods without any road or path. When he started to school our father was absent, and mother went with him, carrying a hatchet to blaze the way.

Of the discipline of the school and its studies I only know that my brother, in relating the experience of several of the boys, made the impression on me that the rod was not spared.

The next school was at the same place in 1838 or 1839, taught by Mr. Dyas, an old Irish gentleman, and I think a regular teacher by profession. The session was three or four months and the studies miscellaneous, but the discipline was exact. He had an assortment of switches set in grim array over the great opening where the chimney was to be when the school house should be completed. On one side was the row for little boys, small, straight and elastic, from a kind of tree which furnished

Indians with arrows and the schoolmaster with switches. At the same time I remember thinking of the feasibility of destroying all that kind of timber growing near the schoolhouse. My terror was a little red switch in that rank which I caught too often, usually for the offense of laughing. The larger switches were graded, partly by the size of the boys and partly by the gravity of the offense, the gravest of which was an imperfect lesson. . . .

As for the studies we all had Webster's spelling book, and were classed according to our efficiency in that great classic. The last few pages contained some stories and fables, intended for reading lessons. They were illustrated, and the last one had a picture of a wolf, a fact which tended to established that book in our estimation, because we saw wolves every day. "The picture of the wolf in the spelling book"—this became the synonym for graduation. . . .

The pupils brought such books as they happened to have, and one young man had Robinson Crusoe for his reading book. His readings interested me greatly, but I fear that my attention was given to the adventures of Crusoe rather than to the teacher's precepts for reading well. Several had Weem's Life of Washington, in which the story of the little hatchet and the cherry tree was most impressed upon our memory. There were no classes in arithmetic. Each boy ciphered through his text-book as fast as he could, and the stern teacher pointed to the errors with the switch held like a pen, and a wag of the head, which meant correction.

We walked morning and evening to and from school, carrying our dinners in tin pails, and milk in a variety of bottles. . . . The Robinson Crusoe boy, of whom I have spoken, one day took it into his head to teach us some arithmetic. There were five cows grazing by the side of the path, and he maintained there were fourteen, proving it in this way: "There are four in a bunch on the right and one by itself on the left; four on the right and one on the left make fourteen." We admitted the correctness of the numeration in the abstract but could not see the cows in the concrete. "Well," said he, "apply your arithmetic; when you buy cattle count in the old way, but when you sell cattle numerate them."

In the fall and winter of 1841 and 1842 another school house materialized as far to the east as the other was to the west,

nearly two miles from home. It was a neat log house in a grove in the prairie, with no spring near, but the patrons substituted a well. The house was an improvement on the other, in that it had shutters to windows and doors; glass was still far in the future. We had also a chimney and a wide fire-place where we kept a roaring logheap in cold weather, when the neighbors brought wood in their wagons (which they did turn about), and a flaming, crackling brush-heap when we had to bring fuel by hand from the neighboring woods.

The following brief scrap of human history, accidentally discovered among some old papers, brings to light a touching case worth inserting here. It is that of a brother of Bishop William Capers, Rev. Dr. James Capers, once a successful preacher and physician in South Carolina, who in later years becomes an unknown rambler and at last totters into an obscure grave in Texas. The item is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

About the last of October, 1834, an old gentleman rode up to my father's, about one mile west of Round Top, in Fayette county, and requested to spend the night. He appeared to be very unwell, and had to be assisted from his horse. He gradually grew worse, and was never able to rise from his bed. In March, 1835, he died. He was a very intelligent man, and gave us a complete account of his life. He said he was the brother of Dr. William Capers, afterwards bishop; that he had been an ordained minister for many years, and showed us a certificate of ordination from Bishop McKendree. He had preached for many years in South Carolina and Georgia. Finally he began to take an undue interest in politics, and in religious and doctrinal controversies. He became embarrassed in business, and lost ground religiously, which caused him to leave and come to Texas. After leading a negligent life he attended a meeting held by Sumner Bacon and was reclaimed and began to preach again. On his sick bed he prayed that he might see Bacon again, and Bacon being found and told of it, came to see the old man, and they prayed and shouted together. My grandfather, who

<sup>1</sup> From a writer, signing J. T. J., in T. C. A., 1857.



lived near us, and who knew William Capers, by long conversations with the old man was convinced that he was his brother. He had a regular diploma degree of M.D., which, with many other papers, he left with my mother, including his Bible; but these were all lost in the runaway scrape in 1836. He preached often, eloquent, inspiring sermons while lying in bed. His remains lie in an obscure, secluded spot about one mile east of Round Top.

Texas Methodism perhaps has never had a more useful layman than David Ayers, who came to Texas in 1834 from New York State. He tried farming for a year, and after the revolution he embarked in business, first at Washington, removing later to Center Hill, and finally to Galveston, where he became one of the merchant princes of his day. Something of his services in the days of spiritual destitution in Texas, and of the hardships and losses of the pioneer, are set forth in the following letter, written to a friend in 1843:<sup>2</sup>

You will recollect that I sailed from New York in May, 1834, in the brig *Asia*, Captain Johnson. Contrary to my express agreement with Captain Johnson, he shipped a barrel of whiskey. The consequence was, he was intoxicated most of the time. He ran us aground on the Bahama Banks, where we were aground eight days. We suffered much from exposure to the scorching rays of the sun, having no awning. To enable us to get afloat, we threw overboard all our heavy lading, and about two-thirds of our water. After we got afloat we were becalmed. Our water failed us. We had on board one hundred persons, one-half of whom were women and children. We were out at sea six weeks. We suffered much for want of water; and when our last half pint was served out to us our vessel was run aground near Corpus Christi Bay. We escaped from the wreck in a small boat, and landed on a desert island, where we encampel four weeks. I succeeded in securing from the wreck the box of Bibles and Sunday School books, which we had received from the Bible and Sunday School Societies in New York. I also saved most

<sup>2</sup> Published in the N. Y. Christian Advocate and Journal, 1843.



of my goods. I was compelled to leave my goods on the beach, while I went in the boat, with my family to San Patricio, the nearest settlement. We arrived at this place three months from the time of my departure from New York with my family. Three of my children were dangerously ill with a bilious fever, and I was obliged to remain with them. When I returned to the beach I found the boxes of goods had been opened, and most of the valuable articles were carried off, including the most of our clothing. The box of Bibles I found safe, and secured it, and felt thankful that things were no worse.

In San Patricio I procured a small cabin for my family; this was made of poles drove in the ground, and covered with grass, without a floor. We were thankful for the shelter. This settlement was composed of Mexicans and Irish Roman Catholics—all, or nearly all, were very ignorant. Having some testimonials from several Catholic clergymen in New York, one of which from Rev. Mr. Powers was a very flattering one, I called on the priest and presented them. These testimonials procured us a very hospitable reception, and we were soon supplied with all comforts the place offered. The priest called at our cabin and expressed a desire to inspect my library, which the rabble had not thought worth carrying off. A Spanish testament attracted his attention; he examined it and pronounced it a correct edition and expressed a desire to possess it. I immediately presented it to him, and he appeared pleased with the present. Father Malloy was our constant visitor, and his example was followed by the inhabitants including the officers of the garrison. My library was the chief attraction to our visitors, and I took care to have two copies of the Spanish Testament always in a conspicuous place. These they all were sure to see, and invariably they would express a desire to procure a copy, and then I would avail myself of the opportunity to present it to them—at the same time informing them that Father Malloy had examined it, and pronounced it a genuine translation. In this way nearly all the intelligent part of the inhabitants procured Spanish Testaments. My supply was nearly exhausted, when one day the priest came to my cabin in a rage, and demanded of me how I dared to circulate that damnable book among his flock. He threatened me with imprisonment, and said he would burn my books and confiscate the little property I had remaining. (He actually did

seize on a quantity of tracts which, by order of the alcalde, were publicly burned in the public square.) I reminded the priest that he had pronounced the translation a good one, and that I supposed he wished his people to read the word of God. He left, denouncing me in the severest manner. In a few minutes I was called on by the alcalde, who informed me that I had committed a great offense. He threatened me, &c. I showed him my passport as an American citizen, and claimed my protection as an American. I afterwards learned that the priest went around, and demanded all the Testaments he could find. I was much gratified that he could not procure all. Some from whom the priest had taken their Testaments away came and requested another copy, promising to conceal it from the priest. I concealed the box of Bibles under my bed. The priest soon made the place too hot for me; and I was constantly annoyed with vexatious lawsuits before the alcalde, which always went against me—and in this way my resources were nearly exhausted. Here I was, two hundred miles from my intended home, robbed and deprived of almost all my means of support, by unjust suits before the alcalde, with a large family, amid an ignorant Catholic population, who were ready to obey the priest, and this priest my enemy. I determined immediately on removing east, and was fortunate to procure a large ox wagon, in which I placed my effects, and I mounted my wife and children on ponies, and we left this place, esteeming myself fortunate in being able to get away with the wreck of my property; I arrived in safety at my place, having spent the last dollar I had in paying ferriage across the last river. The wagoner gave me credit for his bill. On this route I supplied every family I found destitute with a Bible.

The revolution broke out; we were invaded, and we had to flee before the enemy, leaving behind us all our property, excepting some bedding, clothing, some provisions, and a box of Bibles. We wandered from place to place to keep out of reach of the enemy, and lived in the woods eleven weeks, destitute of almost every comfort. The memorable battle of San Jacinto was fought. The enemy retreated; Santa Anna was taken prisoner, and we once more returned to our home. But what a scene presented itself to our view. The spoiler had been there, and nothing was remaining but an empty cottage—every article had been de-

stroyed or carried off. Our bee-hive was split open, and furniture all gone—all presented a scene of desolation which made our hearts sink within us.

We had escaped the horrors of war, and now famine stared us in the face. No corn nearer than 40 miles; nothing to buy corn with but four quarts of salt. No meat—our smoke-house had been emptied. At this juncture a bull passed my cottage, and we shot him down, and on him we subsisted until we procured supplies. My farming prospects all blasted, my stock all gone, I removed to Washington, and there commenced a small business. Mrs. A. and my daughter took in sewing, and God prospered our efforts, and we soon got in good business.

At this period, the Spring of 1836, there was not a solitary church organized in all Texas<sup>3</sup>—nor was there a Sunday school. I started a prayer meeting at my house, and there in a back room a few pious females met with my family, and united with us in praying that the Lord would send us Ministers of the Gospel. I started a Sunday school. The books I had received from the Sunday School Society in New York furnished us with books. On enquiring of the children if they had Bibles at home, I found most of them were destitute of Bibles. These I supplied, and soon my box of Bibles was emptied; and to supply the demand I gave away nearly every Bible I had in my house, except my large Bible. In 1837 I removed to Center Hill, and left the Sunday school prospering.

From the memorials of another Methodist family of those days we give a personal reminiscence never before published. The family was that of Isaac Addison, from which there went forth three sons into the Methodist itinerancy in Texas. Mr. Addison had been a respectable and prosperous mechanic in Baltimore, who, though long settled and confirmed in the habits of city life, and with the best of religious and educational advantages for his family, was nevertheless attracted by the reports of Texas which reached that distant city, and early in 1835 broke up and shipped for the new country. The family,

<sup>3</sup> The church in the McMahan settlement had been in operation since 1834, too far away for the writer to know of it perhaps.

as a part of a large company of immigrants, arrived on board the schooner *Elizabeth* off the mouth of the Brazos in the month of May. In an endeavor to make anchorage at Velasco in the night the vessel hung up on a sandbar and went to pieces before dawn. The passengers escaped in a panic by one way and another, but lost nearly all their goods.

"Our vessel was to have landed us at Columbia, on the Brazos," says O. M. Addison, a son, in his personal recollections of his introduction and early days in Texas, then a boy of fourteen; "but the voyage ending sooner than was expected found us in the country of our future home shipwrecked, among strangers, without shelter or protection from the weather. Our household goods, wet and damaged, were piled up on the beach, and night fast settling down upon us induced a feeling of depression that seemed an unwelcome augury of coming evil. However, no one shed tears or gave way to discouragement. Obtaining a good supper at the hotel in the little town of Velasco, we then extemporized some rude tents, and began our Texas life by the new experience of camping near the beach."

Following the same narrative we may trace the fortunes of this family in Texas until the close of the stormy period of the revolution.

From Velasco we ascended the Brazos in a keel boat to Columbia. Here our passage by water ended, and our further journey to a point near San Felipe was made in ox-wagons, the only mode of transportation in that day, except horseback.

The life was new and exhilarating; the weather mild and pleasant; the camping and life outdoors novel and exciting, and in such contrast with former experience as to make the trip most delightful. On the evening of the third day our wagons drove up to a long log cabin of a single room in the midst of the prairie, where our goods were unloaded, and where we were to make a temporary home until the country could be explored in order to make a suitable location of our land and permanent



residence. Although before starting for Texas we had reduced our household goods to a minimum the little cabin was too small to hold us and our "plunder," as the neighbors called it. We, however, soon adapted ourselves to the necessities of the case, and improvising a shed, covered it with palmetto found in an adjacent creek bottom. This added materially to our accommodations, though the floor of both house and shed were only of native earth. . . .

My father having located a part of our land in Robertson's Colony, on the old San Antonio Road, five miles northeast of the present town of Caldwell, in the latter part of the summer we removed to its vicinity in a couple of large ox-wagons, a journey of about one hundred miles. . . . The place selected was then on the extreme frontier. Securing the occupancy of a little log cabin with a dirt floor about a mile distant from our location, we here passed a season of acclimation with fever and ague. Of doctors there were none, and the little medicine obtainable, improperly administered, probably did more harm than good. In the absence of well, spring or cistern, we used water found in pools in the creek. Warm and impure, it was sometimes sufficiently unpalatable to nauseate a sound stomach; but to a sick person, wrestling with a burning fever, and languishing for a drink of pure, cold water, instead of relief it only cruelly tantalized him with the remembrance of the many refreshing fountains from which he had slacked his thirst in other days.

Our settlement on the frontier necessarily cut us off from supplies to be procured at the centers of trade, and also placed us in unpleasant proximity to the Indians, just about that time becoming hostile. Thus, to a great extent thrown upon our own resources, we soon learned to adapt ourselves to the corn bread and dried beef, the staple bill of fare, and to keep constant watch for the Indians.

Although up to this time there had been no general outbreak of the Indians, some of them were known to be hostile, while the good faith of all was considered doubtful. A short time before our coming a young man, the son of a near neighbor, had been slain by them within sight of his father's house. . . . Knowing our liability to any sudden attack of these savages, it was with no little trepidation that one day soon after our arrival, I saw some dozen or more of them ride up to our cabin. Whether

friendly or hostile, I could not tell, and in the latter case I could not depend upon their truthfulness. I went out to meet them and found them avowedly friendly, and outspoken in their kindly salutation in broken English. But the honesty of an Indian was at a discount, and he could not be trusted.

Seeing no one at home but my mother and myself, they soon became rather rude and uncivil. We had just obtained a supply of fresh beef, which, according to custom, was cut up and spread on a scaffold in the sun to cure. This attracting their attention, they rather demanded than asked for a supply for themselves. I at once gave them what I thought a fair share, when, instead of showing gratitude, they insolently clamored for more. I was not disposed to yield, but mother, anxious to get rid of them, instructed me to give them all they wished. This I did, when seeing nothing more they wished they took an unceremonious departure.

In the quiet seclusion of our frontier home, opening a farm, improving the place, and laboring to make things comfortable, for long seasons together one heard nothing from the outside world. There was neither mail route, post-office nor newspaper, and the only means of communication with distant points was the occasional passing of some traveller, or the rare sight of a well-read newspaper. From these sources we had heard of the overturning of the Federal Government in Mexico by the dictator, Santa Anna, who, having ordered the disarming of the Texas colonists, had sent a large force to San Antonio to enforce the decree. That this force had been defeated, and captured by the Texians, was made known to us by the visit of my eldest brother, whom we had left behind in Baltimore. On his way to rejoin us in Texas he had encountered in New Orleans the war spirit in favor of the young Republic, and volunteering as one of the "New Orleans Greys," had fought in the ranks at San Antonio and assisted in the capture of the Alamo.

We had hoped that this success had ended the struggle with Mexico, and did not know that Santa Anna in person was on the march to Texas with a large army, in a war of extermination, until Travis and his heroic comrades had fallen with the Alamo, so long and so nobly defended. The startling news of these tragic events reached us by special courier at midnight, followed at early dawn by a throng of fugitives from the upper



settlements on the Colorado river, who, having received earlier intelligence of the fatal distaster, were already fleeing for their lives. The old San Antonio Road was the uppermost highway through Texas, and on this thoroughfare passed as forlorn and desponding company as ever fled from blood-thirsty pursuers. Like ourselves, somewhat remote from the seat of war, and in fancied security, the news of the recapture of the Alamo burst upon them like an unexpected storm, and giving them no time for preparation, forced them to hasten their flight by leaving everything not easily transported. A little provision, some bedding and clothing—and all else left, with no hope of a return to enjoy it.

In a straggling crowd the fugitives passed, with just such means of transportation as was at immediate command—carriages, wagons, carts, sleds, pack-horses, oxen packed, on foot and on horseback; old men, old women, young men, young women and children of all condition and ages. These with an occasional drove of cattle and horses interspersed, enlivened the usually quiet roadway that morning, and indicated that business of more than ordinary interest was pressing them forward. . . . In that sad procession passing our house that morning I suppose were fifty or seventy-five families, some already with representatives with Houston in the army, and others intent on placing their wives and children in a place of safety, and then go to the front and unite with those already in the field against the invader and secure the freedom of Texas.

The passing of the fugitives from the Colorado increased the alarm of the few families in our immediate neighborhood, and hastened our preparations for departure. Some provision and bedding were placed in a cart, on truck wheels, the only conveyance obtainable, drawn by two yoke of half broken oxen, and part of the family walking, we joined the rear portion of the scattered fugitives. The promiscuous throng of men, women and children with whom we united had already been on the road for several days, and harassed by fear and weary with travel, having spent the greater part of the previous night on the march, allowed themselves but a short halt for breakfast. This need of haste, we subsequently learned, was well founded, for a division of the Mexican army was actually on the road behind

us, and nothing but an order from headquarters changing their line of march prevented them from overtaking us.

The Brazos was reached in the afternoon, and not being fordable, in the absence of a ferry-boat, two canoes lashed together made a good substitute; and after some delay all were crossed in safety. With the river between us and the Mexicans we felt comparatively secure; and while the greater part of the fugitives continued their flight, a few families, including my father's, remained to hear further tidings from the seat of war.

About this time a continuous rain set in, and the whole country became flooded with water. The river became swollen, and our canoes were washed away. This latter circumstance was a serious affair to our family, for father and an older brother had both re-crossed the stream in the hope of being able to procure better means of conveyance. The rain and high water delayed their return until we became somewhat alarmed for them. Our new friends promptly decided that they had been drowned in the overflow. One old man, in mistaken kindness, took it upon him to inform my mother that from all indications it was quite certain that her husband had been drowned, and that she might as well consider herself a widow. This was almost equal to a confirmation of the fears of my mother. But the suspense and anxiety were soon ended by the absent members of the family presenting themselves on the opposite bank of the river. There were no means of crossing the river, and anxious to hear the news brought by the new arrival, they were closely questioned as to the state of war. My brother incautiously announced the defeat and massacre of Fannin's division of the Texas army. A panic seized the people, and while some waited to hear the close of the story, the greater portion hitched up their teams and fled. The remainder soon followed, leaving but a single family besides our own, and they only because their cart had been left on the other side of the river. Constructing a skiff out of the flooring of a house, in due time the cart and our folks were safely ferried over.

The swollen condition of the Brazos, rendering it difficult to cross, had given us some slight sense of protection from the Mexicans, but knowing they were not idle, we hastened our departure. We found the road in fearful condition—cut up by recent travel, alternately covered with water and deep in mire,

the laboring teams made slow headway. To relieve this strain, many of the women and children were compelled to walk through the mud and wade through the water, with wet garments, to be only partially dried at the next night's camp-fire. The excitement attendant upon such hardships and exposure may have nerved the sufferers to their full endurance, but the discomforts of that memorable flight implanted the germs of disease that shortened many a useful life. . . .

At the Trinity river our road formed a junction with another road, crossing the country lower down. At the ferry here a large number of families had already crossed before the freshet, but the flooded bottom made it tedious to cross, and hundreds were now waiting their turn to be ferried over. As late arrivals would be too long delayed at this point, and as the Navisota river was in a similar condition to the Trinity, my father with several others made a detour to the left, intending to cross both of those streams higher up, where there would be less water and fewer people. The route travelled was a newly made trail, but little used by wagons; the ground wet and boggy and difficult to travel over.

While thus seeking to escape the Mexican we were risking an encounter with the but little more savage Comanche. A merciful Providence spared us, and in due time we safely reached Fort Parker. This was the upper settlement on the Navisota, within a few miles of where the old town of Springfield subsequently stood. To protect themselves from the Indians the people had constructed a fort and moved into it. We rested here a few days, and continued our journey. A few families here had already fled from the Mexicans; a few went with our company, while some remained to meet whatever fate awaited them.

We were fortunate in finding a rude bridge of logs spanning the Navisota, placed there by fugitives who had preceded us. At the Trinity we encountered the rear of a considerable number of families, and by the aid of some canoes, crossed with but little delay. Reaching Fort Houston, a nice little village, already deserted, we rested awhile, hoping soon to ascertain whether the fortunes of war would force us to cross the Sabine, or permit us to return home.

It was well for our company that our stay at Fort Parker was not of longer duration. Sometime after our departure from

that place a band of Comanches appeared at the gate, under protection of a white flag. Confiding unwisely in their honesty, the inmates of the fort permitted them to enter. Having by this stratagem lulled suspicion, the savages soon threw off the mask and massacred or captured their unsuspecting victims, save a few who prudently got out of the way before the tragedy began. Cynthia Ann Parker, then a girl of eight or nine years, was one of the captives. Her relatives made unavailing efforts to rescue her. Years afterward, when the wife of an Indian chief, she, with a child in her arms, was captured in a battle by a party of Texas rangers. Quanah, the noted Comanche chief, is said to be her son.

At Fort Houston, in painful suspense, we waited for information from the seat of war. From the disasters hitherto befalling our arms there was but little grounds for the expectation of good news. Another battle may have been fought, and Houston's army, our last hope, may have been destroyed. . . . Suddenly the looked for intelligence reached us, but who can believe it! Instead of the dreaded reverse there was victory. Instead of the continued flight to the border, we may now return home. . . . The story seemed incredible, and found in every man who heard it a doubting Thomas. Such a combination of favorable circumstances was simply out of the question, and some practical joker had victimized the people by an ill-timed story, too good to be true. But it was true—gloriously true! Gen. Houston, by special messengers, had sent forth the good news, to stop the fleeing colonists, and invite them back to their homes. This confirmed the report, and with thanksgiving in many a rejoicing heart, the weary fugitives turned their faces again to the west, and thus ended what was known among the old Texians of that day as the "Runaway Scrape."

The alarm caused by the Mexican invasion spread to the border settlements on the Sabine, carried thither by the rush of the fleeing population from the interior, and raised almost to a panic by deserters from the Texas army, hurrying out of the country, after the Alamo slaughter. A member of a Methodist family just recently entering Texas gives us a glimpse of the effects of the



war on the border population.<sup>4</sup> "At San Augustine we were advised not to go any further until the affairs of the country became more settled," we are told. "My brother-in-law, Dr. Wells and family, with myself, concluded to remain through the winter [of 1835-36]. My brother and his son went on and joined the army, and the latter was killed in the Alamo. I remained in the family of Dr. Wells at San Augustine until about the first of April, when the news reached us of the fall of the Alamo, and the advancing of the Mexican army, which, together with the fear of Indians, compelled us to retreat across the Sabine, where we camped in the woods and remained several weeks. There were some hundreds of women and children, with nothing to protect them but the branches of the trees, or very poor tents, and many of them almost without food."

In the short but costly struggle for independence the few Methodist preachers and other Church leaders then in Texas bore or took their full part. James P. Stevenson, who had removed into East Texas in 1835, bore arms in the military operations, as did John W. Kenney. Dr. Wm. P. Smith was appointed surgeon in the army, and he served in that capacity until the close of the war. Alexander Thomson was a member of the first provisional government, as was also Asa Mitchell, whom we have not noticed hitherto. Mitchell was one of Austin's original 300 colonists, having come to Texas in 1822, settling first at Velasco. He was a Methodist who took a pronounced interest in all the affairs of his church, although he is best known for his participation in public affairs during the revolutionary period. He was not only a member of the first "Consultation" government in 1835, but in 1836 was a member of the Constitutional Convention, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He joined Houston's army, and fought in the battle of San Jacinto.

<sup>4</sup> From an unsigned letter published in N. Y. Christian Advocate and Journal.



Mitchell County is named for him, jointly with a brother, Eli Mitchell. Present also and taking part in the battle of San Jacinto was Robert Crawford, who soon thereafter became a prominent Methodist itinerant in Texas. Capt. Moseley Baker, afterwards a prominent local preacher in Houston, commanded a company at San Jacinto. Capt. W. J. Russell, who as a sailor first landed in Texas in 1818, returned and settled at Harrisburg in 1827, subsequently removing to Brazoria County. He is said to have fired the first gun for Texas independence at Anahuac in 1832, and the same year participated in the battle of Velasco.<sup>5</sup> After the war he served a term as senator in the Congress of Texas. Some of his activities in connection with the Church and our school interests will be noticed later.

Dr. Smith explains that he did not reach San Jacinto until the day after the battle. "I, as one of the surgeons of the army, was left at Donaho's, in charge of some sixty sick with the measles, being the sick of both Regiments," he says.<sup>6</sup> "So soon as I got them in condition so that some could go to the settlements, to regain their health, Capt. Hill, of Washington county, and myself, took those who were able to join the army and dashed on as rapidly as possible to join the main Army before the battle. When we arrived on April 20, 1836, at the upper encampment, [we found that] the end was knocked out of the ferry-boat, and while some workmen were repairing it, Cos's division came on, fired on the workmen, and wounded one. Then, as Cos's division was between us and the main army, we could not arrive there until the battle was over, and then we hastened to the scene as quickly as possible. I was there in time to aid in attending to the sick and wounded."

With the Texan's sweeping victory at San Jacinto the country is now open for a general invasion of another

<sup>5</sup> Obituary, T. C. A., 1882.

<sup>6</sup> Account in Texas Almanac, 1859, p. 165.

sort and from another direction, which is to begin the following year with the coming of Ruter, Alexander and Fowler. But before setting out upon that part of our history we will first take leave of our old friend, Henry Stephenson. Though Stephenson is to survive a few years more, the active period of his ministry practically closed with the pre-revolutionary days. We have seen that he located in 1835 and removed into Texas. He was now advanced in years; his health was poor, and with a large family dependent upon him, we hear no more of the extensive rounds over Texas which he had made before. His ministerial career was a checkered one. The records show that he was admitted on trial into conferences three times—once in the Missouri Conference, and twice in the Mississippi Conference,—and as many times he was discontinued “at his own request.” The ministry paid him practically nothing toward the support of his family, and yet he kept returning and knocking at the conference door for admission and for “work.” And yet with all the vicissitudes through which he passed as local preacher and itinerant, and struggling always with poverty, this old horsebacker of the front lines of Methodism rides on to the end with “nothing against him.”

After his final location in Texas we have an account of his last visit to the west, made in 1837, to the settlement of the Rabbs and Moores, on the Colorado. His horse gave out, and he entered the settlement on foot. Hearing of the expected arrival of regular missionaries in Texas, he was greatly rejoiced, and used the words of old Simeon, “Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord, according to thy word in peace.” In 1840 he preached and organized the first church in Jefferson County, near Beaumont. In 1841 he attended his last meeting, held near Jasper. He was a sufferer from asthma, and “such was the difficulty of his breathing that he could scarcely get his breath while lying down, and had to rise fre-

quently during the night," says Thrall. This meeting was a good one, and the old gentleman had the satisfaction of seeing his youngest son and daughter converted—the last of ten children. He expected to return home Monday morning, but learning that the Lord's Supper would be administered, said he would remain and take it for the last time. He died November 20, 1841, in his sixty-ninth year.

Stephenson is described as having been "neither learned nor eloquent, in the ordinary acceptation of those terms; but he was a good man, and cherished a single purpose to glorify God and do all the good in his power. He was of a meek and quiet spirit, winning friends by his gentle manners. In one respect nature had favored him. He possessed a most musical voice, a voice which ringing out upon a camp-ground, charmed into silent and attentive listeners all classes of people." An example of the effect of his preaching is related by the famous Tom Parmer, who had been converted under Stephenson's preaching in Louisiana. Later removing into Texas Parmer heard more of Stephenson's preaching. At Teel's, in Sabine County, where Stephenson preached in 1834, young Parmer formed the acquaintance of Miss Rachel Teel, who was not then a professor of religion, and who had not heard any preaching. "I thought she would suit me," says Parmer, quoted in Thrall, "if she had religion, and I thought it was only necessary for her to hear Father Stephenson preach to make her religious. Not long afterward he had an appointment at Bayou Sara, La. This young lady and another and myself went to hear him. We had to ride twenty miles the last morning before preaching. As we got in Father Stephenson was just taking his text. It was: 'Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.' The two young ladies were quite gay; they had got hold

of some starch that a merchant had brought to Texas, and used some, and felt exalted. Father Stephenson had got about half through his sermon when he took the starch out of the girls, and both cried aloud for prayer, and were soon converted. Rachel and I fixed things up at once. I was now a married Methodist, with a Methodist wife."

Henry Stephenson sleeps in an abandoned country cemetery near Burkeville, Newton County. Some belated effort has been made to mark his grave with a plain, inexpensive monument. He left numerous descendants in that region, while two of his sons became local preachers.

## CHAPTER VI

### FIRST REGULAR MISSIONARIES

THE news of the decisive battle of San Jacinto reached the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in session at Cincinnati, Ohio, in May, 1836, and produced no little rejoicing. Much had been published in the press of the country about Texas, and lately the struggle with Mexico had awakened a keener interest in the fortunes of this distant province. The letters and appeals from Methodists in Texas, heretofore noted, had been published widely in the Church papers, so that to the body of representatives of the Church gathered at Cincinnati San Jacinto meant first of all the providential opening of a great door of opportunity for the gospel, and the feeling was general that the response should be instant.

One prominent member of the General Conference, Dr. Martin Ruter, offered himself on the spot as a missionary to Texas, "to go whenever it should be deemed a proper time for entering that field of labor. The superintendents were all consulted on the subject, and all agreed in an opinion favorable to the enterprise. It was believed that the unsettled condition of the country, in reference to its political relations, was not suitable to the immediate establishment of a mission, but that in all probability it might be within a few months."<sup>1</sup> When the superintendents were at length convinced that the freedom of Texas was measureably secure, and that they were not invading a forbidden land, the mission in Texas

<sup>1</sup> Martin Ruter, by E. A. Smith, p. 98.



was officially established. Dr. Ruter received his appointment in April, 1837, as "Superintendent of the Texas Mission," from Bishop Elijah Hedding, who was in charge of all foreign mission work of the Church. Other volunteers selected and appointed the same year to accompany Dr. Ruter as "missionaries to Texas" were Robert Alexander, of the Mississippi Conference, and Littleton Fowler, of the Tennessee Conference. It must be remembered that Texas was, even after its independence was won, a foreign nation, or, in the terms of the Mission Board, a "foreign field," and the first preachers sent out were chosen and supported by the Mission Board, and hence called "missionaries." But the term was a little unfortunate as it applied to the American population in Texas, however destitute they were of the gospel, and here and there awakened some prejudice against the first preachers.<sup>2</sup>

Henceforth the names of Ruter, Alexander and Fowler are to be associated with Texas Methodism—all three are to spend the remainder of their lives in the Texas wilderness, and all are to find their graves in Texas soil. No better choice could have been made for this raw and extensive field than the Church made in sending these three pioneers to Texas. They were all men of experience and ability, filling at the time of their appointment places of prominence and responsibility in their home conferences, and all alike displayed wisdom, courage and enthusiasm under the hardships of their new field. The life of Ruter was cut short after entering Texas, but the character of the man and his work have stamped his name indelibly upon our history. Fowler, though a young man, yet never very robust in health, lived and labored a little less than a decade through our

<sup>2</sup> The writer well remembers the prejudice of the old Texians against the word "missionary," as applied to the early preachers. To their understanding it implied that the people they came to serve were necessarily heathens. Since then the word has become better understood as describing a minister sent to any destitute field.—O. M. Addison.

formative period. Alexander, also a young man, and a giant in body as well as in mind, outlived all his first co-laborers, his career in Texas alone extending over a period of forty-four years.

Alexander, being nearest the field, was the first to enter. "Our itinerant system is the best for a rapid and successful spread of the gospel," comments J. G. Jones on this event. "While other denominations were anxiously looking around for men and means to supply Texas, and were waiting for a call to invite them here and there, the Methodists had a corps of minutemen ready to mount their horses and enter the field, regardless of a special call from any community or the promise of a competent salary. Hence they had entered and taken possession of the field, already white unto the harvest, while others were getting ready to begin the work."

Robert Alexander was born in Smith County, Tenn., in 1811, and was therefore twenty-six years of age at the time of his entering Texas. He was converted and united with the Methodist Church in his seventeenth year. He was licensed to exhort at eighteen, and licensed to preach and admitted on trial into the Tennessee Conference the following year. He served in turn the Bedford, Goose Creek, Fountain Head, Murfreesboro and Mill Creek circuits. He was transferred to the Alabama Conference, but before entering upon that field he was transferred to the Mississippi Conference, and appointed to Port Gibson and Grand Gulf. "In 1835 he was made the Superintendent of the Chickasaw District," says Bishop Fitzgerald,<sup>3</sup> "and began the sort of work which thenceforth was to be peculiarly his own, the occupancy and organization of new fields of evangelization." In 1836 he was appointed to Natchez station—one of the most difficult situations in the whole southwest—which place he was occupying at the time of his appointment as mis-

<sup>3</sup> Life of Alexander, in "Eminent Methodist" pamphlets.

sionary to Texas. "His family," continues Fitzgerald, "was of the North Carolina Alexanders. They were a sturdy clan, Covenanters in Scotland, and among the very first to set the ball of liberty rolling in America. Two of them were signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. It was a family much given to preaching, pedagogy and a patriotism ever ready to talk or fight for their country. They made Presbyterians of the strongest and best type. Such of them as became Methodists went their whole length as Methodists in theology and Christian experience. When one of them was a Hardshell he was hard indeed—double-cased and almost impenetrable."

Alexander "mounted his horse" and set out for Texas in August, 1837. He crossed the Sabine on the nineteenth of that month, and on the same day preached his first sermon in Texas at the house of a Mr. Walker. After a few days he proceeded to the McMahan settlement, where he held a few days' meeting, at which were present James P. Stevenson and Messrs. Crawford, English and Johnson. Alexander spent a month in this section, reviving and organizing the work which had been begun in previous years. He held a quarterly conference, licensed two men to exhort, who afterward became traveling preachers, and organized the San Augustine circuit. Leaving the work here temporarily in charge of his two new licentiates, he hurried on to Austin County and got in touch with John W. Kenney and other Methodists in that section. His coming was hailed with delight by the faithful few in that region, who had time and again appealed to the Mission Board for a regular preacher. It was the announcement of the appointment of preachers to Texas, contained in a letter from the secretary of the Mission Board, and read a few months before at a little prayer meeting in Washington, that produced the "first Methodist shout in that place," according to David Ayers. Soon after Alexander's arrival a camp-meeting

was appointed, which was held near the old camp ground on Caney, in October, 1837. At this meeting there were ten conversions, including the wife of John Rabb and three children of David Ayers, and at the close the first missionary society in Texas was organized and subscriptions taken for the support of the work, amounting to an annual pledge of about \$1,000.<sup>4</sup>

Littleton Fowler arrived in Austin County and joined Mr. Alexander in November. He had set out on his journey to Texas in August, leaving Tuscumbia, Ala., where he had been serving as financial agent of LaGrange College. Mr. Fowler took a more circuitous route and made a more leisurely journey to Texas than his colleague, traveling by way of Memphis, Little Rock and

<sup>4</sup> The following is a copy of the subscription paper, included in an account of this meeting, published in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1857. It was explained that many of the subscribers were not members of any church.

We, the subscribers, promise to pay the sums annexed to our respective names annually, as members of the Texas Missionary Society, auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, to John Rabb, Treasurer of the Texas Missionary Society, or his order. October, 1837.

J. W. Stoddard \$5; John Ingram 5; C. Longley 2; James Rees 5; J. W. Kenney 20; David Ayers 100; E. G. Canon 1; John Rabb 50; J. R. Chambers 1; W. E. Allcorn 1; W. W. Marley 3; Thomas Polk 5; John Fennel 1; N. Breeden 5; John Breeden 5; J. E. Scott 5; J. W. Crawford 1; B. F. Ravell 20; John Tyler 5; John Crawford 5; James Stevens 5; A. Brown 7; Thomas Bell 20; J. Tumlinson 5; Robert Price 1; Wm. Medford 5; John Davis 1; John Martial 1; B. M. Carr 2; B. F. Foster 5; Asa Mitchell 5; W. Sanders 5; L. P. Moore —; James Foster 10; J. P. Lynch 5; Thos. Cohorn 5; Abner Mallory 1; Nancy Chance 20; Parmelia Foster 1; Julia Bracey 3; L. A. McHenry 10; Martin Stephens 5; B. H. Grover 5; S. Y. Reams 5; B. Grenville 5; Catherine Gates 10; Robert Crawford 5; Jacob Castleman 2; Daniel Gilliland 2; James Duff 2; Andrew Miller 5; Robt. W. Scott 5; Randle D. Heck 5; James R. Stevens 5; J. Stephenson 10; Amasa Ives 5; Ewald Cox 5; Wm. Francis 1; W. R. Martin 5; B. Thomas 10; J. H. Bostick 5; John Stevens 5; James Bell 5; John B. King 2; James H. Scott 20; Wm. Camiss 5; J. P. Wyatt 1; Wm. A. King 5; Joseph B. Crosby 100; Ann Simpson 5; Eliza McFaden 5; Mrs. Peare 1; Mary A. Harris 5; Mary McCrory 5; G. W. Grimes 5; J. A. Simpson 5; A. W. Burk 2.50; A. J. Simpson 5; James Hall 4; Abner Lee & wife 5; M. W. Dikes 5; James Stevens 5; James Chappel 5; James Simpson .50; S. Miller 2; Z. Jackson .50; Martha Brean 5; Eliza Jackson 2; Esther Bardsley 2; Mary Ann Tyler 1; Thos. M. Penick 35; J. B. Crawford 5; J. W. Lancaster 10; H. M. Smith 10; Geo. W. Cox 5; Samuel Carl 5; D. E. London 5; John Shrupski 5; J. Dosland 5; M. M. Davis 5; M. Pearl 5; B. H. Rucker 5; R. T. Armstead 4; F. W. Hubert 5; Cyrus Campbell 1; H. O. Campbell 2; Allen Ingram 5; J. G. Hefington 5.



through the Choctaw Nation, where he had relatives, and where he was detained by illness. He entered Texas by way of Red River, traversing and preaching in the country where some efforts had been made twenty years before to plant the Church. Mr. Fowler kept a journal covering the period of his introduction into Texas, and from it some extracts are given. First, he sets down his reflections on leaving home:

Tuscumbia, Alabama, August 22, 1837. This day I leave this place for the Republic of Texas, there to labor as a missionary, having lately been appointed to this field by the Board of Foreign Missions of New York. The impression made on my mind to go as a foreign missionary to Texas is as strong as the one which first called me to the ministry; consequently I shall expect the presence and blessings of God to attend me. In view of the labor and privations which must await me my soul is firm and undaunted. I rather rejoice that I am worthy to labor and suffer for my blessed Master. Yet the fact of being severed from my country, my kindred, my friends and brethren fills me with deep sorrow and affliction.

Passing on to his entrance into Texas we have:

On my departure from Arkansas I employed Rev. John B. Denton, a local preacher, to labor in the Texas mission. Sept. 30 we reached the Sulphur Fork praries. Travelled up the [river] sixty miles, where I preached at Bro. Duke's to fifteen hearers. . . . Held a camp-meeting near Clarksville, [Red River County]. . . . In company of three others, with provisions packed for four days' travel, we struck out across Texas for Nacogdoches. On the way we passed the unburied body of a man who had been shot six weeks previously for horse stealing. We slept in the woods four nights, using our blankets for beds. . . . Reached Nacogdoches Oct. 16, preached two sermons, one by J. B. Denton, one by the missionary. On 19th, in company of Brothers Spear and Denton we got to San Augustine, where I preached four nights in succession and held a two days' meeting. At the close of the meeting I began a subscription for lumber to build a church for the use of a Methodist Episcopal church. In



less than two weeks from the time the suscriptions were opened, a lot was deeded to us 160 feet square, central in town, with three thousand five hundred and twenty-five dollars subscribed. Trustees were appointed and the house under written contract to be finished by the first of September next [1838]. . . . This success to raise funds to build a church was never equalled in the United States in any efforts which have come under my observations. . . . From Nacogdoches I travelled to Washington on the Brazos, then on twenty-five miles southwest to Brother Kenney's, where to my great delight I met on Sabbath morning, November 12, my coadjutor, Robert Alexander; here we held a two days' meeting [illegible]. It was the most impressive and delightful meeting I have seen in Texas. . . . On the night of the 14th I preached in Washington to a crowded assembly in a school house. Many stood out before the door and listened attentively. While in Washington Mr. Gay gave two lots, 100 feet by 120, on which to build a Methodist church, which is to be frame of plain character and moderate size. . . . From Washington I travelled to Houston through a poor and flat country. Arrived on Sunday morning, 19th [Nov., 1837], preached in the afternoon to a crowded house that paid the closest attention. In this capital of the new Republic there is much vice—gaming, profanity and drunkenness the most conspicuous. Houston is now ten months old, with eight hundred inhabitants, good State House, many stores, and a vast number of doggeries [saloons]. . . . Nov. 21, the Senate of the Texas Congress elected me chaplain for the remainder of the session. . . . Nov. 26, preached morning and night to large congregations in the Capitol. . . . Am busy visiting the sick and writing letters back to the United States. Steamboat arrived with 103 passengers. . . . Congress adjourned Dec. 19, 1837. . . . Dec. 21, this morning I leave for San Augustine to be absent nearly a month. Have obtained a deed for a lot in this place [Houston] for a house of public worship. The lot lies near the Capitol and is 125 feet by 250.

Some features of Mr. Fowler's narrative impress us that he had the eye of a church extension secretary, as he was much imbued with the idea of building in all the rising young towns which he visited. Thus on his first visits to San Augustine, Washington and Houston he

secured eligible and ample lots, and at San Augustine a building was soon under way.

Leaving Mr. Fowler for the time being, we must drop back just a month and note the arrival of Dr. Ruter in Texas. Fowler and Alexander had parted in Austin County, Fowler going to Houston and Alexander setting out for Natchez, to attend the session of his conference to be held there early in December. At Gaines's ferry on the Sabine he met Dr. Ruter entering Texas, November 21. The two spent the night together, the most of it in conversation relating to the work in Texas.

Dr. Ruter had had the longest journey of any of the missionaries in reaching Texas, having come from Meadville, Pa., where he had resigned the presidency of Allegheny College to accept the appointment to Texas. He had left Meadville in July (1837), and after bestowing his family at New Albany, Ind., he found that he would be compelled to remain in the upper country until frost, on account of the prevalence of yellow fever on the lower Mississippi. He came down in the fall by boat, landed at Rodney, La., and rode horseback across the country to Texas. Dr. Ruter was fortunate in having for a traveling companion on this journey a well-informed Texas Methodist, David Ayers, returning from a journey to the East. Mr. Ayers wrote down his impressions of the Doctor and many incidents on the way, which we reproduce:<sup>5</sup>

The Doctor preached his last sermon, before leaving for Texas, in the presence of the Indiana Conference, in session at New Albany, in November, 1837, Bishops Soule and Roberts both being present. On Thursday afternoon he bade farewell to his wife and children, no more to meet them on earth. On the steamer on which he took passage for New Orleans the writer of this was his room-mate. He spent much of his time in private devotion and in reading the Bible. He was never idle, and though quite cheerful and affable toward all with whom he

<sup>5</sup> Published in the *Annals of Southern Methodism*, 1857.

mixed, yet his demeanor was marked by a calm dignity and thoughtfulness, which, with his great earnestness in devotion, indicated that his heart was burdened with the grandeur and importance of his mission.

The number of the passengers was very large. Among them was a company of actors, on their way to New Orleans. . . . Before reaching the mouth of the Ohio one of the passengers died. Dr. Ruter attended him in his last moments, offered him the consolations of the gospel, and when the boat stopped to bury him he read over his grave the beautiful burial service of our ritual. On Sabbath a committee appointed by the actors waited on Dr. Ruter and requested him to preach to the passengers in the gentlemen's cabin. The Captain, all the hands that could be spared, and all the passengers attended, and he preached one of his best sermons. In the evening the ladies invited him to preach in their cabin, which he did to a large audience of both sexes.

We landed opposite Rodney and proceeded on horseback. The first night Dr. Ruter spent in Texas was at Gaines' Ferry, on the Sabine, where he met Rev. Robert Alexander . . . who had come this far to meet him, and was also on his way to the session of the Mississippi Conference at Natchez. They spent most of the night in conversation, consulting as to the plan of their future operations, and next morning separated. After a hard day's ride we reached San Augustine, and the Doctor resolved that if he could get a congregation he would commence his work in Texas. The school house was procured, lighted, the notice circulated, the school bell rung, and as soon as he obtained some refreshment he found a good congregation assembled, to whom he preached a plain, practical sermon.

Proceeding the next day (Saturday) to within eight miles of Nacogdoches, he determined to spend the Sabbath and preach in that place. His traveling companion was requested to precede him early on Sabbath morning, and having procured the court house, at the hour of service a large congregation, including the principal citizens, was assembled. Dr. Ruter requested that some one would lead in the singing, when Hon. Adolphus Sterne raised the tune; the whole congregation united with him, and a stranger would have supposed he was in the midst of an old Methodist society. A sermon of great interest followed.

When about dismissing the congregation several persons simultaneously arose and requested that he should preach a second sermon, to which he consented, and in the evening addressed a crowded house. . . .

Nothing else of interest occurred until we arrived at Mitchell's [James Mitchell] west of the Trinity. In a conversation with the writer Mrs. Mitchell casually observed: "I have lived in Texas several years, and have not heard a gospel sermon during that time." Dr. Ruter, who was sitting by the fire reading his Bible, asked: "Did I understand you to say that you had not heard a sermon in many years?" Being answered in the affirmative, he said: "My good madam, if you will hasten your supper, clear off the table and call all the family, you shall not say that when you retire to-night." She complied with the suggestion, and Dr. Ruter held service with the same formality as if in a church; reading the lessons, singing, praying, and preaching a most elaborate and instructive discourse, his congregation consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, the children, one stranger and the writer. He was remarkably tender and fervent during this sermon. In the morning he asked for his bill. "I have no bill against you," said Mr. Mitchell; "but Doctor," he added, "if you are the good man I think you are, the first news that I expect to hear from you will be a report that you have stolen a horse, or run away with another man's wife." Seeing that Dr. Ruter was considerably startled by this remark, he continued: "You may expect all sorts of evil reports; you need not look for anything else." The Doctor was not fully aware of the suspicion engendered in the minds of the citizens of Texas by the many impostors and doubtful characters who were coming into the country. Mr. Mitchell told him to make his house his home whenever he came that way. He and his wife afterwards joined the Methodist church, and ever since Dr. Ruter preached there his house has been a home for the itinerant preacher, frequently a preaching place.

We suspend this narrative here to say that Texas had had perhaps more than its share of impostors, or would-be ministers whose character did not comport with their pretensions. Fowler records in his journal that he had encountered a prejudice on this account more than once.



In May, 1837, a "Committee of Vigilance" was organized by a few ministers who happened to meet in Houston. This committee included the names of Dr. Smith, then a Protestant Methodist; Revs. Mathews, Methodist Episcopal, and Morrel, Baptist. The object was to protect the public from ministerial impostors, by giving publicity to all such, and requiring that proper credentials should be produced before recognition should be extended.<sup>6</sup> But the ministry was given a better standing in Texas more by the character of a few men who were now coming to the Republic, like Ruter, Alexander and Fowler, with a few strong and faithful men of other denominations who soon began to labor here, than by the operations of any "Vigilance Committee," though this agency perhaps served some good use.

To resume the course of Dr. Ruter, the superintendent proceeded from Mitchell's to Washington, where he remained over Sunday and preached, and journeyed thence to Center Hill, then the home of Mr. Ayers. He visited J. W. Kenney, and accompanied by Kenney he went to San Felipe, and then rode thirty-five miles through rain and mud to a settlement on the Colorado, where he and Kenney preached and a class of nine members was organized. The Doctor then set out for Houston, reaching that city about the middle of December, where he met Mr. Fowler before the latter had departed for San Augustine. Dr. Ruter reached Houston before Congress adjourned, and by invitation he preached to both houses of that body and other officials of the government in Congress Hall. He also consulted with many of the leading men of the government about certain educational plans which were maturing in his mind.

Dr. Ruter had also formulated an arrangement which,

<sup>6</sup> Z. N. Morrel, "Fruits and Flowers," p. 74. The Methodist preacher, Mathews, mentioned was evidently Z. H. Mathews, whom we find named in but one other instance—that of having performed the marriage ceremony in the case of the first license issued in Harris county, July, 1837, from History of Harris Co., S-W Hist. Q., XVIII, 4.



with his limited supply of laborers, he thought would best take care of the work in Texas temporarily, and this plan he communicated to the Mission Board in a letter dated Houston, December 18, 1837.<sup>7</sup> In this he set forth his plan for the immediate formation of three circuits, as follows: Houston circuit, to embrace Houston, Velasco, Columbia, Matagorda, Brazoria, Egypt, Texana, San Felipe and four other appointments not named, with Fowler in charge; a Washington circuit, including seven or eight appointments which had already been visited by Alexander, with Alexander in charge; a San Augustine circuit, having six appointments, to be supplied by such local preachers as he could command. In a later communication the superintendent points out that his plans had to be altered somewhat, without giving reasons, but indicating that the substitute arrangement was not as well pleasing to him. Alexander returned from the Mississippi Conference and took up the work on the Washington circuit, to which Dr. Ruter had appointed him; and with the aid of local preachers he reached out and embraced a wide territory in his labors. Fowler remained at San Augustine, and spent the winter in that territory. The territory of the proposed Houston circuit went unsupplied, except as the Doctor himself, or an occasional local preacher, touched it. Dr. Ruter had laid out for himself the greatest task of all, and that was during the winter to visit every settled portion of Texas, to see and study conditions at first hand, and to return late in the spring to the North and attend the meeting of the Mission Board and Bishops and lay the whole matter before them and ask for a large force of helpers. For a man of his antecedents, the energy and enthusiasm displayed by Dr. Ruter in prosecuting this self-imposed task of endless horseback travel over the raw wilderness of Texas, through the rains and mud of mid-winter, will ever remain a source of wonder to the readers

<sup>7</sup> Published in N. Y. Christian Adv. & Journal.

of his journal. David Ayers says that he often went with the Doctor on some of his journeys, and that while he considered himself a hard rider, he found it no easy task to maintain the pace set by his companion. Thrall records that Dr. Ruter rode a large black horse, always "in a sweeping trot," and that on one occasion when advised by a traveling companion to turn in and await better weather the Doctor insisted on continuing his journey with the remark that "the Master's business requireth haste."

From Houston Dr. Ruter returned to the interior. He held a quarterly meeting at Center Hill in January, 1838, at which Mr. Alexander was present and the work of the Washington circuit was formally begun. This quarterly meeting was held in the woods, near Caney Creek, the members sitting on logs. Here Dr. Wm. P. Smith transferred his membership to the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the same ministerial standing, and Dr. A. P. Manly and D. N. V. Sullivan presented their credentials as local preachers, both of whom later entered the traveling ministry. Dr. Ruter then visited Washington, Independence, Gay Hill and other places in that region, and then struck out for the frontier settlements to the west. He preached and organized a church at Bastrop, consisting of fifteen members, and traveled and preached among the upper settlements on the Colorado. He then returned to the lower country and made preparations for setting off on a tour of eastern Texas, after which he expected to proceed to the United States. But in the spring death overtook the great missionary and laid him low. Before taking up the account of Dr. Ruter's last sickness and death we will lay before the reader many interesting extracts from his letters and reports showing the wonderful amount of travel and labor he was able to crowd into the few months he lived in Texas. These will be given in more or less continuous

form, without interrupting to note every date or circumstance of writing:<sup>8</sup>

On Saturday the 9th we arrived at this place which, on account of its fruitfulness, is called Egypt, and in the evening preached, as we did also on the Sabbath, morning and evening, and formed a society of ten members. In the afternoon I gathered a small assembly of colored persons, and preached to them. The colored people in this country are not numerous. From this place I expect to proceed to Bastrop, on the Colorado, and to some settlements thirty or forty miles above that place; and if I can find an armed company in readiness to proceed to Bexar, on the San Antonio river, I intend going with them to that city. My object will be to know, by personal observation, the state of the inhabitants, and in what settlements they will readily receive preaching. Those who go at this time into that part of Texas generally go in companies of five, six or more, armed with pistols or rifles on account of the Indians; but whether in company or alone, I shall carry no weapons made with hands. . . . Wherever any of us have been, we have met with a kind reception, and there seems to be general willingness that the gospel shall spread in the land. The immoralities of some that have come here, professing to be ministers of Christ, have created prejudices, and caused some of the people to act cautiously toward preachers of the gospel. But it is a remarkable fact that imposters in this community are very soon known, and persons of good standing in their own country are very soon duly estimated. . . . The accommodations, of course, are often poor. Many of the houses are cabins, without glass windows, and with but little furniture. The chief food is corn-bread, sweet potatoes and meat. Butter, cheese and milk are scarce. Though I find it necessary to dispense with most of the luxuries and comforts of life, yet how glorious the privilege of doing good among the destitute. . . . I have just returned from a neighborhood lying fifteen or twenty miles from this place, one part of which is called Independence. The inhabitants are generally in good circumstances and some are wealthy. I found them ready to hear

<sup>8</sup> Extracted from records published in connection with Life of Dr. Ruter, by C. C. Cody, in Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, I, 1.

preaching, and some urged me to think of that place for the residence of my family, as they seem to take it for granted that I shall remove to Texas. . . . This neighborhood and Bastrop on the Colorado are two places which I have thought might be kept in view, if we all come to Texas. Washington, where I am now, will soon be a place of some importance in business, but being shut in by forests is not so desirable a spot. The country generally on the Colorado is said to be very fine. Beyond it is the San Antonio country, said to be the most brilliant part of Texas, but it has but few settlements, though the city of Bexar is in the midst of it. I expect next week to visit Bastrop and proceed above it forty miles up the Colorado, which I am told is as far as I can go safely, on account of the Indians; but so far as they have expressed a desire for preaching I shall form a circuit to include them. The emigrants are generally aiming at the Colorado, and will soon form upon its banks a dense population. I have been down near the mouth of it, but the country there is not so healthful as farther north. . . . My labors in Texas will be directed to forming societies and circuits, establishing schools, and making arrangements for a college or university. Some of the people here are very rich, some are very poor, some religious and some profligate. But preachers are needed, and preaching beyond measure. I feel certain our mission will have entire success. We have now twelve societies. . . . Texas is a country where darkness, ignorance and superstition have long held their dominion. Profaneness, gaming and intemperance are prevailing vices against which we have to contend. The scattered state of the population renders it necessary to travel far between the appointments, and the want of convenient places for public worship serves to increase the obstacles in the way; yet amidst difficulties, dangers and sufferings we rejoice in being able to say that the great Redeemer's kingdom is rising in this distant and destitute land. I have just returned from Bastrop, one of the upper settlements of the Colorado river, where the inhabitants informed me that they had had but three sermons preached among them during the last three years. In coming to this place we passed through a part of the country not inhabited, but occasionally infested by Indian robbers who come on horseback from the north (travelling either by night or in the forests), for the purpose of stealing horses,



and murdering and plundering the travellers whom they may find unarmed. I went in company with three friends armed with rifles. . . . It has appeared to me that we ought, as soon as practicable, to establish in this Republic a well endowed university and several subordinate schools of different gradations. In two or three places subscriptions have been taken sufficient for buildings, and to provide permanent funds we propose obtaining donations in land. Many of the citizens are extensive land holders, and would, while lands are cheap, make large subscriptions. But as lands are rising in value, a fund thus invested would in a short time be sufficient for the above purposes. We propose to pursue a similar course in obtaining grounds for churches and parsonages. I have been hitherto prevented from visiting Bexar and its vicinity, as I had intended; but it seems, in some instances, more needful to supply and occupy places which we have explored, than to explore others which we cannot occupy. . . . Under many disadvantages the glorious work of God is advancing, and thousands are not only willing but eager to hear the word of salvation. We have already formed twenty societies in Texas, have obtained a number of lots for churches and school, secured by deeds, and several meeting houses are commenced, with a prospect of being soon completed. I trust by the grace of God to lay the foundation for a glorious superstructure, and that the Church of Christ will be here established in its purity, power and glory. I have now travelled fifteen hundred miles in this distant and destitute land, over its prairies and forests and streams of water.

The impetus which Dr. Ruter gave to the establishment of an educational institution in Texas will be considered in another connection; also a more exact report as to the condition of the Church at the time of his death. We turn now to the sad records which lead to the close of his career. The last entries in his journal record the onset and progress of his fatal illness:

April 1, 1838, Sunday. Preached in the morning and evening to the white people; in the afternoon to the blacks. This was a day of comfort. Monday, 2. Rode to Brother Kesse's. Tuesday, 3. To Mr. Cochran's. This day makes me fifty three



years of age, and I this day set out to devote myself more than ever to God; first, by more prayer; second, by more attention to the Scriptures; third, by general reading and meditation. Wednesday, 4. Rode to Mr. Ayers'. Thursday, 5. Rode to Mr. Cochran's and attended a marriage. Friday, 6. Rode to Mr. Bracey's. Saturday, 7. Being afflicted with fever, rode to Mr. Ayers and then to Brother Kenney's. Sunday, 8. Too ill to preach, and Brother Kenney went to my appointment and preached in my stead. Sunday evening. Find myself better, and my mind stayed on God, to whose service I hope to be devoted forever. Monday, 9. Rode to Mr. Ayers'; still unwell and under temptation. Tuesday evening to Mr. Rabb's. Wednesday, 11. To Mr. Kesee's. Feel somewhat improved in health. Thursday, to Mr. Hall's, trying to recruit my strength. Feel myself relieved in trusting in God, my only helper. Saturday, 14. Rode to Washington, and found at the post office letters from home, which gave me comfort. Consulted a physician concerning my health. Sunday, Rode to James Hall's, and preached to an attentive audience; received one awakened sinner on trial; then rode to Brother Kesee's. Monday. Amidst afflictions rode to Mr. Ayers'. Wednesday, 18. Rode to Brother Kesee's. Thursday, 19. Set off in company with Brother Chapel for the Red River, on my way home. Found at night my illness increasing. Found Brother Chapel urgent to travel. Friday, 20. We reached a Mr. Rivers' where we stayed through the night. Saturday, 21. So ill I thought it prudent to take an emetic, and advised Brother Chapel (as he was uneasy) to go on alone. He delayed till 2 o'clock, and finding me no better, went on. Now here I am with a threatening fever, among strangers. But my trust is in the Most High; his mercies are abundant, and live or die, O let me do and suffer his blessed will. I commit to him myself and dear family, wife and children, now and forever. Amen. Sunday, 22. Found myself somewhat relieved, but perceived that my disease was settling upon my lungs, and thought there was danger of serious injury. Being entirely without medical aid or advice, and too ill to venture on my journey, it seems judicious to return, if able, to Washington. Rode with more ease than I expected to Mr. Kennard's, twenty miles. After resting there I proceeded to Mr. Fanthorpe's, eight miles; then to Washington, arriving there on Monday, being seventeen miles.

Feel much fatigued, but comforted with the goodness of God. O, how unsearchable his wisdom, and his ways past finding out.

Here Dr. Ruter's journal closes. He wrote letters to his family, explaining his inability to proceed home, but expressing hope of ultimate recovery; also letters to Dr. Bangs, of the Missionary Society in New York, apprising him of his sickness, and giving a complete report of the work which had been accomplished. At Washington he was among his friends, including two physicians, Drs. W. P. Smith and A. P. Manly, and his faithful co-laborer, Robert Alexander. Alexander, not anticipating the end, was away to fill an appointment, when at 2 A.M., on May 16, 1838, Dr. Ruter died. At 5 P.M. on the same day his remains were buried at Washington, after a funeral service conducted by Dr. Manly.

The news of Dr. Ruter's death, as it spread over those portions of Texas which he had so recently visited, carried gloom to every heart that had known him; and the intelligence, as in course of time it came to be published in the Church press of the United States, together with many of the Doctor's letters and reports, awakened a new interest in the field which had claimed his life. For many years there had been but few men better known throughout the Church at large, or who had rendered more distinguished service, than Dr. Ruter, and the fevers of Texas struck down no ordinary man when he fell. The career which ended at Washington on the Brazos in May, 1838, began at Charlton, Mass., where Martin Ruter was born April 3, 1785. The family removed to Bradford, Vt., and here in 1799 Martin was converted and joined the Methodist Church, which his parents had recently joined. The father was an honest, hard-working blacksmith, and unable to contribute much toward the education of his children. But Martin records that he had a taste for learning and a thirst for knowledge from his earliest recollections, and that he diligently improved

every opportunity for study, both at home and in the neighborhood schools. His parents having removed to a neighboring town, Martin returned to Bradford to attend school, where he boarded with and came under the strong and sympathetic impress of Mrs. Margaret Peckett. This lady, formerly Margaret Appleton, had come from England, where for three years she had served as housekeeper for John Wesley. She was staunch in the Wesleyan faith and she had imbibed much of the Wesleyan spirit. "Her home was not only a preaching place for the early itinerant, but was also a small seminary where Martin Ruter, Laban Clark and four other young men received from her the Wesleyan impress and enthusiasm, arousing in them a desire and capacity for general reading and private study which was the secret of their success in subsequent life as pioneer Methodist preachers." No one can read Dr. Ruter's journal, or go over his systematic and accurate reports, without noting the Wesleyan type.

In his fifteenth year Ruter consecrated himself to the ministry. He was licensed in 1800, and entered upon a travel and study tour with Dr. John Brodhead, his presiding elder. He was admitted on trial into the New York Conference in 1801, "the youngest man, save one, ever admitted to an American Conference." He filled appointments in that region, and at Montreal, Canada, and in 1808 was appointed to Boston. He served as presiding elder on the New Hampshire district for two years, and subsequently filled the appointments of Portland, Me., and Philadelphia, Pa. He was elected a member of the first delegated General Conference in 1812, and he was a delegate to the General Conferences of 1816, 1820, 1828, of which he was secretary, of 1832 and that of 1836, when he volunteered for Texas. In 1818 the degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by Asbury College, Baltimore, and he was appointed head of New Market Wesleyan Seminary, in New England, which place

he filled for two years. In 1822 fell to him what was then a unique honor among Methodist preachers—the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity; this from Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky. “This is believed to have been the first instance of such an honorary title accorded to a Methodist preacher,” says a biographer of Dr. Ruter, Ernest Ashton Smith.<sup>9</sup>

It is interesting to note how such matters were regarded in those days. “Many of the brethren of his denomination were disposed to look askance at such an artificial distinction, possibly associating it with the wearing of jewels and costly raiment. Finally, in the General Conference of 1832, a number of memorials on the subject of preachers accepting the title of Doctor of Divinity was submitted by the Philadelphia Conference. . . . The petition and the debate following . . . developed much difference of opinion. At length the Rev. J. B. Finley said he believed it to be a foolish waste of time to debate such a question; the colleges would do as they pleased, and would honor such ministers as they thought worthy of it, and the ministers would do as they pleased about accepting the honors. Whether the colleges recognized our ability to teach divinity or not, the world knew it. We have been doctoring the divinity of this country for half a century or more and have got it in a convalescent state, and if the people would let us alone we would cure it entirely. Finally Dr. Martin Ruter got the floor . . . and described how his title had come to him unsought. He was not aware that it had made him any wiser or better, nor had it done him any harm. He did not know that he preached any better or any worse, nor did it confer on him any special gifts or talents. The degree had its influence with a certain class of the community and gave him an access that he could not otherwise have had. . . . Dr. Ruter moved the indefinite postponement

<sup>9</sup> Martin Ruter, p. 35.



of the whole subject, which was carried by a large majority.”<sup>10</sup>

By election of the General Conference of 1820 Dr. Ruter became the first Book Agent of the Western Division of the Book Concern at Cincinnati. He established this business and conducted it almost without assistance for eight years. At the close of this period he was elected president of Augusta College, Kentucky, which place he filled for two years. In June, 1834, he was called to the presidency of Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa., for the purpose of rehabilitating that institution. After two years of arduous labors here, he laid down his work and volunteered for the new mission field in Texas, thus gratifying the inclination which he says had always been strongest in him—that of doing pioneer gospel preaching.

One word more, touching the final disposition of Dr. Ruter's remains after his death in Texas. Through the efforts of Robert Alexander a marble slab was placed over his grave in the little burying ground at Washington, which bore a lengthy inscription by Dr. William Winans, of Mississippi. In April, 1852, his remains were removed from this cemetery and re-buried with Masonic ceremonies beside a brick church in the town, named in his honor. In after years this church, because of a sinking foundation, became unsafe and was abandoned, and the town of Washington became almost deserted, because of rising centers of population elsewhere. In 1899, at the instance of Rev. C. L. Spencer, a Methodist preacher in the neighborhood, who had formerly been the pastor of Dr. Ruter's family in the North, the remains were again removed and finally deposited in the cemetery at Navasota, six miles distant. After “having appealed in vain to Texas Methodists, for money to erect a suitable monument, in keeping with the few surroundings,” Mr. Spencer wrote to Bishop Mallalieu, who became in-

<sup>10</sup> Smith, Ruter, p. 36.



terested in the matter and raised the funds. The memorial, a plain shaft of Vermont granite, twelve feet high, was dedicated by Bishop I. W. Joyce on Dec. 3, 1901.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE YEAR 1838

AN exact report of what had been accomplished in Texas at the time of Dr. Ruter's death is contained in his last letter to the Mission Board in New York, dated Washington, Texas, April 26, 1838, and forwarded to the Board after the Doctor's death. "Our present numbers," he says, "are twenty societies, three hundred and twenty-five members, twelve local preachers, six of whom are elders, and three exhorters. In San Augustine, Nacogdoches, this town, Cedar Creek and Caney Creek we have churches in progress or soon to be commenced. In San Augustine, Washington and Nacogdoches we have regular Sabbath schools. We have taken some steps toward founding a college." In a foot-note he adds: "Our church in Washington is completed, the Sunday school large and prosperous, with a library consisting of 150 volumes, obtained in New Orleans. The churches in San Augustine and Nacogdoches will be finished by September, worth \$4,000 in San Augustine and the other worth \$2,500. Several small country meeting houses will be finished soon."

In a letter to the Mission Board, accompanying Dr. Ruter's report, and containing the announcement of his death, Robert Alexander says: "The new church in Washington has just been opened, and has been preached in by Dr. Manly and Bro. Kenney, local preachers." Comparing these reports with other circumstances, it appears that the church at Washington was practically completed before Dr. Ruter's death, but that it was not

opened or used for services until after the Doctor's death and burial. In the one brief reference to his funeral service which we have there is no hint that the new church was used on this mournful occasion, as would have been most appropriate if it had been in readiness; but, on the contrary, it appears to be plain that it was not used. "At 5 o'clock P.M. the same day," says the account,<sup>1</sup> referring to the day of Dr. Ruter's death, "the corpse, followed by a large concourse of citizens, was conveyed to the burying ground at Washington where it was decently interred. The funeral service was performed by Rev. A. P. Manly, M.D." We must, therefore, fix the date of the completion and opening of this church—which was the first Protestant church building in Texas—as occurring shortly after Dr. Ruter's death. As it appears that Alexander was absent from Washington at the time of Ruter's death, it was probably during this same absence that the church was completed and used, as the following from Dr. Manly would indicate: "For want of lumber we split out and hewed oak timber for the frame, and made and hewed oak and ash boards for weatherboarding. We covered it with common oak boards. When completed, as Bro. Alexander, our missionary, was then on some other part of his work, I preached the first sermon in it."

The church in San Augustine was the first building projected, but as it was on a more ambitious scale it was not expected to be finished, according to Dr. Ruter's report, until September. We have seen that Littleton Fowler, on his first visit to San Augustine in October, 1837, secured the lot, appointed trustees, and raised a subscription for this church. In January, 1838, upon Fowler's second visit, returning here from Houston, the corner-stone of the church at San Augustine was formally laid. Mr. Fowler records in his journal, under date of January 7 (1838): "To-day the cornerstone of the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. P. Smith in Texas Wesleyan Banner, 1851.

Methodist Episcopal Church was laid in this place [San Augustine] with the usages of the Masonic Order, between forty and fifty of whom were present. Five or eight hundred persons were assembled, more than one hundred of whom were ladies. Agreeably to the arrangements previously made, two speeches were delivered on the ground, the speakers standing on the newly laid cornerstone. The first was by Littleton Fowler, the other by General Thomas J. Rusk, in his usual forceful and eloquent style. The event was one of moral grandeur, calculated to excite deep and strong feelings in the bosom of every patriot and Christian. This cornerstone is the first one of a Protestant Church ever laid west of the Sabine River in the infant Republic, where the inhabitants were so lately under a government of religious and civil despotism."

Mr. Fowler remained in eastern Texas until April of this year, preaching alternately in San Augustine and Nacogdoches. In the latter place he secured a lot, "centrally located, with subscription of two thousand five hundred dollars to build a Methodist Church. Organized a society of eighteen members; also two other societies, one twenty-five miles north, the other forty miles west." Fowler's building enterprise at Nacogdoches, which was projected with such promise early in 1838 as to lead Dr. Ruter before his death to report that it would be completed "before September," nevertheless failed completely. Preaching was kept up here continuously thereafter, the meetings being held at various places; but it was not until 1860 that a church building was erected in Nacogdoches.<sup>2</sup>

In April, 1838, Mr. Fowler returned to Houston, where he remained for nearly two months, serving as chaplain of the Texas Senate, and preaching in the city occasionally. A graphic picture of the appearance of

<sup>2</sup> From report in Texas Christian Advocate, signed "Timothy," June 21, 1860.

the new capital city and the then metropolis of Texas is given by Audubon, the famous naturalist, who visited it about this time and thus describes what he saw:<sup>3</sup>

As I ascended the banks of the bayou I saw located on the edge of a prairie a town of about 800 houses, some framed, some log cabins, most of them unfinished. The merchants seemed to be doing much business; but the saloons—and of these there were a large number—seemed to be doing the heaviest business in the place; everybody seemed to patronize them.

The inhabitants are of many nationalities, and from many States. The mud is about a foot deep, and the men wear their trousers inside their bootlegs. I visited Congress, and found it very orderly, and business was conducted according to parliamentary rules, though occasionally a member went out for “a drink.” I visited President Houston, and found him busy examining papers. I was puzzled to understand how he could be so indifferent to his surroundings; the floor was covered so deep in mud it could not be seen; papers and books were piled on two tables, and save a few chairs, there was no other furniture in the house. Mrs. Houston was still in New Orleans for medical treatment.

When the President finished the work on which he was engaged, he invited me to go across the street for a drink. I declined, but he went, and soon returned with two or three friends.

At first, in view of the scarcity of hotel accommodation, I could not understand where so many people could be lodged. I soon learned that the prairie was dotted with tents; these tents were partially concealed by the tall “coffee bean” weeds, which were cut down just enough to make room for tents.

Mr. Fowler records in his journal that during this sojourn in Houston he attended the organization of the Grand Lodge of Masons, “with about forty members present,” that he was elected Grand Chaplain, and that he visited the rising young city of Galveston, accompanying an excursion party which went with “the President

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Blandin's “History of Shearn Church,” p. 11.



and his suite." We will let Fowler give his own account of this incident:

May 14: I have been seriously ill for more than two weeks. When sufficiently recovered I took a trip with the President and suite and members of Congress to Galveston Island. . . . On our return from Galveston Sunday afternoon about one-half on board got wildly drunk and stripped themselves of their linen and pantaloons. Their Bacchanalian revels and blood-curdling profanity made the pleasure boat a floating hell. To me the excursion was one of pain, not pleasure. I relapsed from this trip, and was brought near the valley of death.

Houston gives yet no promise of becoming a Methodist stronghold, as Fowler makes no record of the discovery of any Methodists in the town, or of anything done looking toward organization beyond the lot for a church, which had been donated by the original proprietors of the town. Fowler was in Houston at the time of Dr. Ruter's death at Washington, but soon afterwards he returned to eastern Texas, where, on June 21, he was married to Mrs. Missouri M. Porter. After his marriage he settled on a farm in the McMahan community, east of San Augustine. While located here he was instrumental in the erection of a house of worship, to shelter the congregation which had been formed here by Henry Stevenson in 1834. In September Mr. Fowler set out for the United States to attend the session of his conference.

It might be noted in passing that Robert Alexander had, on January 25 of this year, married Miss Eliza Ayers, a daughter of David Ayers; and so both he and Fowler had soon found a life-companion in Texas.

The death of Dr. Ruter and the departure of Mr. Fowler later left but one lone traveling preacher in the country—Robert Alexander—for the remainder of the year. Alexander was vigorous and energetic, but not equal to the task of covering the entire field. As many

local preachers as possible were enlisted, and the most of these then in the country magnified their office during all this early period. Dr. Ruter had reported that there were twelve local preachers in Texas. There were others, but it may be that their standing had not been formally or officially recognized. The following are known to have preached in Texas during this period: Wm. C. Crawford, James English, Mr. Martin, Job M. Baker, J. W. Kenney, Dr. Wm. P. Smith, Dr. A. P. Manly, D. N. V. Sullivan, Daniel Carl (licensed this year by Littleton Fowler), Samuel Rogers, and Henry Stephenson and James P. Stevenson, both of whom had removed into Texas. Crawford, English, Martin and Baker were located in eastern Texas, in Shelby County and its neighborhood. Wm. C. Crawford had been a member of the Georgia and Alabama conferences. He had located and removed to Texas in 1835. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention which met in Washington in 1836. Thrall says of Crawford and this convention: "It was fortunate that Mr. Crawford was in it. The course of the Romish priesthood in Mexico was strongly condemned in Texas, and a prejudice excited against all ministers of religion. A section was introduced into the Constitution disfranchising all preachers, and forever prohibiting them from occupying any office of profit or trust in the republic. Mr. Crawford succeeded in getting this so modified as only to exclude preachers from seats in Congress and holding executive offices. In this shape it passed, and a similar provision was ingrafted in our State Constitution in 1846. No such clause is found in our present Constitution. However unclerical it may be for ministers to seek political preferment, it is manifestly unjust to proscribe them like common felons." To which, while thus digressing, it may be added that the charity of this historian is notable in that he ascribes the constitutional action against Protestant ministers in Texas to the "course of the Romish priesthood in Mexico."

Crawford and others during 1838 organized a church at Shelbyville, and held a series of meetings in that region in which there were some two hundred added to the church.

It is to be regretted that it was not agreeable to the taste or disposition of Robert Alexander to write about his own work in Texas. He kept no journal; wrote nothing to the papers, and only the briefest scraps from his hand remain. He did, at the solicitation of the historian Yoakum, prepare a brief account of the beginnings of Methodism in Texas for that author's history, in which he has more to say of others than of himself. In this account we are first apprised of some new difficulties which the early preachers had to face in a few places; namely, the disturbance of worship by rowdies. "The population of Washington," we are told, "was recklessly wicked"; which needs a word of explanation which we gather from other sources. The war with Mexico in 1836 had drawn into the country a multitude of adventurous spirits who had enlisted in the Texas army. After independence was won the new government was slow in disbanding the army through fear of further molestation from Mexico; and yet, with an empty treasury, there was nothing with which an army could be paid or provisioned. The plan was adopted of releasing the larger part of the troops on furlough, and these furloughed soldiers remaining in the country became a public nuisance. They congregated in various places, or moved from place to place, drank, gambled, caroused at night, and otherwise made life miserable to the peace-loving citizens. They of course drew after them every lewd fellow of the baser sort, and many thoughtless and wayward youngsters. An example of the reckless wickedness referred to by Mr. Alexander—and of the indifference of the government to the welfare of religion—is related by Z. N. Morrell, one of the first Baptist preachers in Texas, and

who labored with Alexander in Washington in 1838:<sup>4</sup>

Our meetings on Sunday were very regularly kept up, and the prayer meetings continued. About midway between my residence and the little house of worship, and about sixty yards from each place, in the principal grocery<sup>5</sup> in town, an opposition prayer-meeting was organized. At first they did not interfere with our meeting. All the crowd would attend ours, and immediately after it was closed they would gather in the grocery, and the leader of the band would open in due form. Our services were imitated to the best of their ability. Our names, who led in public prayer, were called at the grocery with a loud clear voice, and parties there responded with prayers and exhortations. . . . There was no law then that we could use to break down this great evil, that was so fearfully contagious in its character. The bread and wine, emblems of a Saviour's love, were frequently administered by these mockers of God and religion, before the public gaze. . . . Elder Robert Alexander, the first missionary from the Methodist Episcopal Church, had come to Washington the previous year, and had preached on several occasions. Dr. Smith, a Protestant Methodist, had fallen in among us. Two Cumberland Presbyterian preachers arrived—Roark and Andrew McGowan. . . . These preachers were now present, intending to hold a protracted meeting. This was the first meeting of days ever held in the town, and it was rather more than the fiends and mockers could willingly submit to. The house in which they proposed to hold the meeting was a vacated billiard-room on Main street, with a long gallery in front. On the second night of the meeting there was a general attendance of the citizens, loafers and gamblers of the place. We soon discovered that the disturbers of our peace on former occasions were present, with the purpose of interfering with the worship of the congregation, without the fear of God or man before their eyes. A man was stationed outside of the house, just behind where the preacher stood, with a hen in his arms. While the preacher was lining out his hymn he would hold the

<sup>4</sup> Z. N. Morrell, "Fruits and Flowers," pp. 80-82. The meetings referred to were evidently held in Washington prior to the completion of the church building, as the services were held in another building.

<sup>5</sup> This name in those days was applied to saloons.



chicken by the neck. When the congregation would sing he would make it squall. A large copper-colored negro man was stationed on the gallery in front, with some twenty or more of these lewd fellows around him, partly intoxicated. When the congregation sang and the hen squalled, the negro, acting under orders, would put his head in at the window and shout at the top of his voice, "Glory to God!" The response from outside was given, "Amen and Amen." I was sitting near by the window from whence the disturbance came. My wife and daughter were near by me. I arose and stood by the window, with the walking cane in my hand that I had brought from Tennessee, made of hickory, with a buck-horn head. My bosom heaved with holy indignation, and as the negro put his head into the window the second time, and as the congregation sang and the hen squalled, I struck him just above the left eye, making a scar that he carried to his grave. . . . After the stroke with the cane they were preemptorily ordered away, with the statement that there were more dangerous weapons behind. It had been customary with us, since the Indians killed two of our men during religious service at Nashville the year before, to take our weapons with us to church, as well as to other places. Some usually stood guard, while others worshipped. There was no further disturbance of consequence until the service was over. The sermon was preached by Mr. Roark; Mr. Alexander closed.

In default of legal protection, a hickory stick was as good means as any for preserving order about religious gatherings. It proved effective at the Washington meeting, as the writer adds that the services were continued for several days without any further molestation whatever.

The old town of Washington on the Brazos, in which John W. Kenney erected the first cabin in 1833, early forged to the front as a place of prominence in state affairs, as a point of commercial importance, and it was for a time the "hub" of Methodism in the wilderness. It was here, on March 1, 1836, that the convention of colonists met, and, on the following day, declared Texas independent of Mexico. Dr. Ruter made his headquarters



at Washington during his brief missionary career in Texas, and it was here he died and here he was buried. At Washington, as we have seen, was completed the first Methodist, and the first church of any Protestant faith—in Texas.

Referring to another instance of services held in Washington by Robert Alexander, evidently prior to the completion of the church there, we have in this case to refer to a hall over a saloon, a place which afterwards became historic. In 1842, due to a Mexican invasion of Texas, the capital of the Republic was moved from Austin to Washington. The second story of a saloon was fitted up as the "Hall of Congress." This hall had been used as a gambling and billiard room, and on occasion as a ball room.

"In the same hall, some years before, occurred an incident that may be worth relating," says J. K. Holland,<sup>6</sup> a survivor of an early State Legislature; and proceeding, he says:

A large body of gamblers and like characters had gathered in the town of Washington and held complete sway. The citizens were cautious of what they said and to whom they said it, for these men defied all law. While things were in this condition, Rev. Robert Alexander . . . stopped in Washington. He at once engaged the room over Hatfield's saloon and announced that he would preach there on the following Sunday. The gamblers sent him word that he could not use that hall, that it was employed for other purposes, and that they would not allow him to preach in it. Mr. Alexander was a man of gigantic frame, being nearly seven feet in height, and had courage in proportion to his size. He repeated his announcement, and was there on time. He walked leisurely into the hall and spoke courteously to the men there assembled. Assuming that they were there to hear him, though he knew that it was not so, and that they were getting ready for their usual game, he affected not to notice the cards that he saw them slipping into their seats

<sup>6</sup> Quarterly Texas State Historical Assn., I, 94.

behind them, and made preparation to begin his sermon. He arose, and some of the more determined men in the crowd made demonstrations as if to rise also, but did not. He opened his Bible and laid it on the billiard table, then remarked that if there were those present who did not wish to hear him they could leave. None left. He said he had come to preach, and he meant to do it. He again remarked that if any were present who did not desire to hear the gospel he wished them to leave. Still nobody went. He then proceeded with a fire and brimstone sermon. Soon after beginning he discovered a little commotion among his hearers. He paused and simply said he wished their attention, and order was restored at once. When he got through the men came forward, shook his hand and thanked him heartily, made up a purse for him, told him if he ever needed more money to call on them, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

With the forms of great preachers and statesmen, who once could be seen walking through the old town, and who lifted their voices in its improvised halls, the old settlement of Washington itself has gone the way of all the earth. Nothing remains to mark the spot but the beginnings of a State Park, a 50-acre tract of lonely ground, enclosed by a wire fence, and containing a small monument erected by the school children of Washington County.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE YEAR 1839

IN the fall and winter of 1838-1839 the forces in Texas were largely increased, the Mission Board responding to the appeals and needs with a serious effort to take possession of the field. But while the Mission Board provided the funds, the selection of "missionaries," for Texas and their assignment was left to the Mississippi Conference, to which Texas remained attached. The session of the Mississippi Conference for 1838 was held at Grenada, opening on December 5, Bishop Morris in charge. We cannot forbear, before noting the appointments for Texas, making record of a certain action taken by this conference, expressing the convictions of our fathers on certain questions then being debated. The following extract is from a series of resolutions adopted:

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this Conference that the introduction of instrumental music into public worship in our churches and the conducting of the music in our churches by choirs, in the common sense of the term, is injurious to the spirituality of singing, and is inconsistent with the directions of our Discipline.

The following appointments were made for the "Texas Mission District":

Littleton Fowler, P. E.

Houston and Galveston, Abel Stevens.

Nacogdoches, Samuel A. Williams.

Washington, Robert Alexander, Isaac L. G. Strickland.

Montgomery, Jesse Hord.

Brazoria, Joseph P. Sneed.

The bishop and his cabinet, none of whom had ever been in Texas, wisely left it to the discretion of the Texas presiding elder and preachers to rearrange these appointments. Accordingly those preachers who were first on the field, or who could be gotten together, were called in council at San Augustine in December, 1838. Present were Fowler, Hord, Williams and Strickland. The following arrangement of the work was agreed upon: San Augustine, including Nacogdoches and Shelbyville, S. A. Williams; Montgomery, including all the territory between the Trinity and Brazos rivers, I. L. G. Strickland; Washington, embracing all the country between the Brazos and Colorado rivers (except the lower country), R. Alexander; Houston, with all the coast country between the Trinity and San Antonio rivers, Jesse Hord. Abel Stevens and J. P. Sneed had not yet arrived in Texas, and were given no assignments in this plan. Hord was from the Memphis Conference; Strickland and Williams from the Tennessee Conference, and Stevens from the Baltimore Conference; but all, by taking work in Texas, became transfers to the Mississippi Conference. Sneed was a member of that conference.

The preachers who had reached Texas entered upon their appointments in mid-winter, and in what appears to have been an unusually cold and rainy season, and the difficulties in blazing the way through a country almost without roads and wholly without bridges, and seeking out and collecting into societies the widely scattered—and in too many instances backslidden—Methodists, form a chapter of hardships and heroisms seldom equaled in our history. Jesse Hord, one of the ablest of these new recruits, and who was destined to a long and useful ministry in Texas, fortunately put to writing many interesting chapters covering his early labors, and these records we shall use liberally.<sup>1</sup> Hord was born in Tennessee in

<sup>1</sup> Hord kept a journal, and long extracts from this, expanded by his recollections, were published in T. C. A. shortly before his death, which occurred at Goliad in January, 1886.

1809. He was soundly converted in his seventeenth year, and soon took up the work of the ministry. He was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1834. In 1838 he and Strickland, a fellow-member of the Conference, volunteered for the Texas Mission. Hord received his appointment on June 4 of that year, but he did not leave for his new field until at the close of the succeeding Conference, held at Huntsville, Ala., in October. From Huntsville he and Strickland set out, riding together by way of Memphis, Little Rock, Benton and Hot Springs, Ark. From Hot Springs they proceeded southward, but soon the path of travel played out. They hired a guide, who conducted them to Washington, Ark., where they found the Arkansas Conference in session. Thence southward they traveled for four days, through a trackless wilderness in the pouring rain. Hord had a brother living in Louisiana, whose place they reached, and after a brief sojourn here they turned their faces westward, reaching Gaines's ferry on November 29. They tarried in eastern Texas for several days, and on December 17 set out from San Augustine for the fields of labor to which Fowler had assigned them. Here we will let Hord take up the narrative:

After travelling some twelve miles we came to a swollen creek. I ventured to try its depth; was suddenly submerged—made for the opposite shore, which I reached safely, but wet enough. Mr. Strickland was more fortunate. A few paces above the ford a long pine log spanned the creek, upon which he crossed, keeping himself and effects dry. But I am wet and cold; the north wind strong; no fire; no house nearer than fourteen miles. These miles were behind me about the close of the second hour; house comfortable, family refined, kind, hospitable. Here we passed the night happy, hearts full of gratitude to our Father above.

Dec. 18—This morning I feel quite well. No bad effects from the wetting and cold ride on yesterday. We travelled all day through an uninhabited pine country, arriving at a tavern on the



river Neches. A tavern? Yes; one without meat, coffee or vegetables—milk out of the question. However, a great lusty fellow wound his horn nearly two hours for the hogs. They came; one was shot, and at ten o'clock p. m. he gave us a supper of fried pork. In the meantime, some other travellers having arrived from the West, we had coffee.

Dec. 19—This day's travel has been through a variegated country—some very good. All these settlements are deserted from fear of the Indians.

Dec. 22—This morning I left Brother Strickland in the bounds of his work, and alone, with a sad heart, go forward to the south and south-west, for the district assigned me. At noon I stopped at a country house for refreshments and rest; the lady discovered that I was reading the Bible, and asked: "Sir, ain't you a preacher?" "Yes, madam, I preach some when I have opportunity." "Will you read and speak some for us if I'll call in the neighbors?" "I'll try, madam." They came together, and I redeemed my promise as best I could, and was quite delighted with the feeling and interest manifested.

Dec. 23—Am thirty miles from Houston; no intervening settlement; a cold north-west wind howling loudly. However, I set out for the city; did not travel far before encountering a swollen creek; no alternative, I entered its turbid waters; my horse, being brave, strong and a good swimmer, bore me safely to the desired shore. Now a vast prairie (the first I had seen) lay before me, flooded with water. No use to mind this—I am already wet from the swimming; so forward I go with a cold norther playing sportively on my back. At evening the city was entered; put up at the City Hotel; crowded to uncomfortableness; yet, by pressing, gained a seat in front of the blazing fire, where I remained until ten o'clock p. m., when I sought rest in sleep.

Dec. 24—I arose refreshed. After breakfast went out to make acquaintances, especially of two ministers said to be in the city. I soon found Rev. Mr. Allen, Presbyterian, with whom satisfactory arrangements were made for harmonious preaching in the city. I next visited Congress, which was in session; had an introduction to several members, all of whom received me cordially. They spoke in high terms of the importance of the gospel being preached in Texas; gave many good wishes for suc-

cess, and promised every assistance that lay in their power to render.

Dec. 25—This sacred day I spend in travel through mud and water, in transit from Houston to Richmond, on the Brazos.

Dec. 26—Spent in Richmond; preached at night to a good congregation; good feeling; much interest; the Holy Spirit rests upon many.

Dec. 27—I made a detour for San Felipe, travelling through mud and water under foot, and water falling violently from above; and last though not the least, I met a violent norther. I embraced the first opportunity to enter a house.

Dec. 28—After a hard day's travel I reached San Felipe; put up with Dr. Matthews, a Methodist preacher, well educated and intelligent, with whom I counseled with reference to leaving an appointment; he pronounced it impracticable under existing circumstances; so I declined any subsequent visit.

Dec. 29—This morning I started for Egypt. Between me and it is a vast flat, muddy prairie, in width forty miles; but by a desperate effort I made the ride. I called at the first house and asked to be entertained for the night. The gentleman offered some objections. "Sir, if you please, I am wet, tired and worn out. I am a Methodist missionary, and wish to preach in the settlement on to-morrow." "Enough; get down." "Thank you, sir." I went in and was made comfortable and happy, too, for the night. This was my first acquaintance with Dr. John Sutherland, of precious memory.

Dec. 30—I preached this morning to a good congregation, which came together on short notice. The "word was with power." All seemed glad and quite happy; for the time I forgot my cold, wet fatiguing ride to this settlement. Among them was a number of "old-time Methodists." The congregation seemed to vie with each other in hearty expressions of welcome. Here I felt as if I should love to rest; "but the King's business requireth haste."

Dec. 31—I left Egypt, going down Peach Creek to another settlement; found no professed Christians, yet the people were anxious for preaching; I left an appointment and went on for the head of Bay Prairie, where I spent the night *incognito*. I saw that these people were sinners indeed—"such Jesus came to seek." I left an appointment.

January 1, 1839—I started for Matagorda, pulling through black mud, a pouring down rain and a howling norther. About noon I reached a house where I remained till the morning of the 3d, to rest my horse and to have my clothes adjusted for the Sabbath.

Jan. 3—Much refreshed I set out through the black prairie mud for Matagorda, and entered the city at 3 o'clock p. m., a stranger to all. Having a letter of introduction from Rev. Fowler to Colonel Horton, I went to his residence. He was absent, and I handed the letter to his wife, who, after reading it, gave me a cordial welcome, and tendered me a room in their house during my stay in the city, which was accepted with thankfulness. Here, through the goodness of God, I was well domiciled with this very refined and intelligent family.

Jan. 6—I attended the Episcopal service at 11 o'clock a. m. At 3 p. m. I preached. We had much interest. I also preached at early candle light with much liberty. I opened the doors of the Church, and four came forward. This was the beginning of the first Methodist class in Matagorda.

Jan. 8—This day I travelled thirty miles up Old Caney to a settlement. The people had heard that a preacher was coming, and they were much elated, so much so that when I got to the settlement I was thus hailed as I passed: "I suspect you are the man of whom we have heard. Won't you preach for us to-morrow?" Certainly this people were hungry.

Jan. 9—To-day I had the exquisite pleasure of preaching to this people, so hungry for the gospel. They literally drank in the word, all suffused in tears. After services I travelled fourteen miles to a Mrs. Hardeman's, where I had a good rest.

Jan. 10-11—I went to Brazoria. No opportunity was offered for preaching, but I left an appointment and proceeded to the Gulf Prairie Colony and put up with Major J. P. Caldwell, with whom I passed a most pleasant night, and with whom I left an appointment for preaching. Thus far every town and settlement visited has accepted an appointment. So I thanked God and took courage.

Hord proceeded from this place to Velasco; thence returned to Caldwell's. He visited Brazoria and the Bell settlement, near Columbia; preached at Columbia and

East Columbia, and then proceeded to Houston. Arriving at Houston he makes this entry in his journal:

Jan. 18—Four weeks previous I was here and left an appointment for this time, and came to meet it as best I could. I had visited all the cities, towns and villages, except Galveston, as directed by Rev. L. Fowler, and had preached at the most of them and left appointments for future work. I realized it would put to the utmost test the strength of both man and horse to meet twenty-odd appointments, embracing a circuit of about five hundred miles, over a flat and muddy country. I resolved to try. On my arrival I learned that two ministers had just arrived and had taken lodgings at a private boarding house. Thither I went, and found Mr. A. Stevens, accompanied by Mr. Hoes, agent for the American Bible society. I made their acquaintance, and was very happy at additions to the ministry in Texas.

Jan. 21—In visiting yesterday for the distribution of tracts, I found some Methodists; very cordial, anxious for preaching and class-meeting, and more of it; consequently we sought and obtained the privilege of holding our services in an academy; so when I return I purpose to preach both in the morning and at night, and have class-meeting at 3 p. m. This arrangement gives me some encouragement, and it inspires a hope of some success in this "Babel" city.

But, having left twenty appointments scattered over the muddy coast country, to be covered in the next four weeks, Hord hasn't much time to tarry in the capital city, and the following day he sets out.

Jan. 22—I rode eight miles to Richmond; put up at Dr. Bryant's; removed my muddy garments; repaired to the house for preaching; found a good congregation; preached with some degree of liberty; considerable interest and feeling in the audience. I then organized a society consisting of six persons. This is the first Methodist society ever formed in this village or vicinity. After dinner I accompanied Rev. J. Patton to his home twelve miles from Richmond; here I had a night's rest, in the profoundest sleep. Thank God for sleep.



Jan. 23, 24—These two days I rested at Brother Patton's. Am quite worn and weary, even to sickness, and my poor horse is more worn than I, for he has carried me about four thousand miles with but little intermission or rest. I thank God for a good horse.

Jan. 25—I purchased a horse of Brother Patton, and, though rather unwell, set out for Egypt, my next appointment. My friend Patton accompanied me a mile or so; gave me the course, there being no road or trail leading from this section to the crossing of the East Bernard. With the given directions set out alone, and after a ride of some five hours reached the desired point, having passed through miles (as I thought) of water, reaching from the knees of my horse to the seat of my saddle. Such a chain of lakes, lagoons and marshes I never before encountered. But here I am at a house, wet, cold, and alive, and here is the landlord. "Sir, can I stop with you and get some refreshments?" "Where did you come from?" "Jones's settlements on the Brazos." "Across the prairie?" "Yes, sir." "Well, well; nothing but a duck or a goose ever crossed that prairie. Get down; you can have accommodations."

The next day the intrepid circuit rider crossed both branches of the swollen San Bernard "dry-shod, by riding upon my knees in the seat of my saddle," and by evening he was comfortably housed among friends at Egypt. On January 30 he organized a class at the head of Bay Prairie, and on the following day—the last day of January—he had a memorable service and organized a class in the DeMoss settlement on old Caney—among the people who were so hungry for preaching on his first visit. At the night service held here, in the depths of the forest, by the light of a burning log-heap, the preacher records that "many, if not every sinner of the assembled company, bowed and cried aloud for mercy. This service continued to a late hour in the night unabated in interest. Several professed to have obtained a degree of comfort. There was however, one poor soul who from the beginning seemed to be overwhelmed with a sense of the guilt and burden of sin, whose conversion was clear, pente-



costal. The tongue of fire seemed to rest upon her, and she confessed her conversion in the language of praise and thanksgiving to God. This lady, Mrs. Tone, with other persons, joined the Church at the close of our service for the night. . . . Mrs. Tone, now living with her second husband, had been from early womanhood to middle age the wife of the notorious Laffitte, and with him had encountered all of his various fortunes by sea and land. . . . Here, then, I enlisted in the Church of God an eccentric character. I determined to try to keep posted in the history of this case. I did so, and now would record the facts as I learned them: She maintained her relation to the Church in a firm, bold and independent manner, making no compromise with the world. The end came; she had peace and triumph through Jesus Christ."

Here, for the time being, we leave Hord, the great pathfinder of the coast country, in the midst of the second round on his "Houston circuit," after recalling that to date he had organized four societies, the first in their respective localities—namely, Matagorda, Richmond, Bay Prairie and in the DeMoss settlement. Hord has noted in his journal the arrival of Abel Stevens and a companion in Houston in January, 1839. Mr. Stevens' companion was the Rev. Shuyler Hoes, the first agent of the American Bible Society to enter Texas. Messrs. Stevens and Hoes purchased a Mexican pony apiece and set out from Houston for the home of David Ayers. A terrible rain and sleet-storm prevailed, and as the second night came on they found themselves lost in the wilderness, with the prospect of having to spend the night without food, fire or shelter. As they rambled on they came within sound of a human voice, raised to a high pitch, and guided by the voice they came to a cabin. This was the home of Thomas Bell, a devout Methodist, who at that hour was engaged in family prayer, and who, "when in the spirit, as he was that evening, was famous for loud

praying." They found themselves within three miles of their destination, and traveling on, by Mr. Bell's directions, they reached the home of Mr. Ayers at eleven o'clock that night.

Mr. Stevens began preaching at Independence, Washington, Center Hill and other places. Fowler came into the country and held a quarterly meeting at Center Hill, and assigned Mr. Stevens to the Washington circuit. Alexander, who had occupied this ground, moved farther west, taking up his residence at the new town of Ruttersville. But Mr. Stevens remained in Texas only until June of that year, when he returned to the North. While his residence and work in Texas covered a period of only six months, his later prominence in Methodist councils and as a historian of his Church gives weight to his observations on conditions in Texas at this time. His interest in Texas continued long after his return to his native country, and he wrote and published many appeals in behalf of the religious welfare of the new Republic. The following appeal, addressed to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, appears in *The Christian Advocate and Journal* (New York), issue of August 16, 1839:

In my last I endeavored to show the importance of the Texian Mission from the importance of the nation among whom it is located, and the present incipient nature of its institutions—a condition which places its religion and education at the command of our missionaries. I referred to the growth of its population, and the disproportion between its population and its supply of ministerial labor. I have failed to present the argument in its true force if it has not been made to appear that few if any other missionary fields present so many facilities for success and such rich promises of the future, and attracted so little sympathy from the Church of Christ.

As a second reason why greater attention should be bestowed on this mission I would mention that, though its rapidly increasing population are scattered not a small number of our own

people. There are two thoughts connected with this fact worthy of attention. The first is, that these members of our Church, distributed through all the settlements, give peculiar facility for the introduction of the gospel. No other missionary ground presents this advantage. Wherever we go we find Methodists in Texas. I have not met with a single settlement in Texas where there are not more or less. Such settlements there may be, but I have not found them yet. These stand forth to welcome us as fast as we penetrate to their abodes, and many are in the habit of going ten or twenty miles to hear preaching. They are the elements of the future religious organization of the country. Many of them are substantial families, trained up in our Southern Churches, and fervently attached to all our doctrines and usages. About 550 are already collected into classes, though we have but six circuits and eight preachers there; and there are many more, no doubt, spread over the regions not included in the range of our present labors.

The other thought to which I have referred is, that while many of our people, on removing to Texas, have retained their fidelity to the Church, and are preparing a highway for it through the country, many apostatize and become a reproach to the name which they bear. Back-slidden Methodists are sprinkled over the whole settled extent of Texas. Among them are found former leaders, stewards, exhorters, local preachers and even members of Conference. Nor is this to be wondered at when their circumstances are considered. They lived for years in a primeval wilderness, with but very few of the conveniences of civilized life . . . with no religious teachers, no sabbath, and too far separated from each other for even occasional religious intercourse. I heard a Methodist say he was five years in Texas before he saw a professor of religion. It is more difficult to avoid spiritual declension under such circumstances, especially when they continue long, than most, who are better situated, would imagine. Many who would be shining lights for our cause, have been lost through our tardiness in providing them with the means of religion. Many more are now likewise endangered from the same cause. The chief influence of Methodism is on our Southern States; and it is from these States that the immigration to Texas mainly flows. There is a general movement of the South toward it, which is bearing thither a large quan-

tity of our wealthiest influence. Not only members of our Church call thus for our solicitude, but hundreds who have been educated under our influence, and to whom we can be more useful than other Churches, are likewise borne along in the current. Now with all the peculiar advantages widening into a prospect of success truly sublime, which I have described in my former letter, and with an army of immigration marching, as it were, under the pillared cloud of ancient Israel, into this unparalleled field, what is the Church in its official powers doing toward the improvement of these circumstances? . . . I am not saying that apostacy is peculiar to Texas. The cause mentioned, viz, a deficient supply of religious means, has led to the same result in all our Southwestern States. The cities of these States are thronged with backsliders. An army of them could be collected in New Orleans. What, then, must we expect of Texas, where the institutions of religion are just beginning to be established?

The Methodist Episcopal Church bears the chief responsibility of the spiritual salvation of Texas. God points her to that land. His providence has directed thither many of her best members, to prepare the way for her. It is estimated that of the Christians in Texas, nineteen out of twenty are Methodists.<sup>1</sup> These are so disposed over the country that if twenty more missionaries were now to enter it they would find the material to form as many new circuits. Double this number would not be too many; but there should be no delay in reinforcing the mission with this increase. Not only are we summoned to this field by hundreds of our own people, but by the general sentiment of the nation. I have mentioned that most of the immigration to Texas is from the Southern States. The influence of Methodism in that part of the Union is general. The people of Texas have carried with them their attachment to our Church. Other sects have their members and friends, but the religious predilections of the country, take it in its length and breadth, are for the Methodist Church. Not only their old attachments to us have this effect, but they know that our peculiar modes of operation are best adapted to their immature state. They remember, too, the sympathy we have already shown them. They

<sup>1</sup> An epigrammatic description of Texas a few years later, contained in the *Scientific American*: "Texas is a great, beautiful, dry, windy, cotton, cattle, Methodist, live-oak State."



have not forgotten, that when dangers and uncertainty beset them at home, and the voice of the civilized world scorned them, the form of the Methodist itinerant, with his horse and saddlebags, appeared as by magic in the very center of their land. . . . While the grave of Ruter is in their midst they will be grateful to the Methodist Church. . . . Other sects are showing an interest for it—a distinguished Catholic clergyman has been surveying the field for his own Church; a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church has visited it; and one or two missionaries of that denomination are there. One of the leading men of the Presbyterian Church made a similar visit on behalf of its Board of Missions. One denomination I understand is making efforts at this moment to dispatch a score of missionaries. I am unfeignedly glad of the interest taken by any evangelical sect in this unevangelized field. . . . But I am anxious that the Methodist Church should have the conviction that the field is peculiarly her own.

The foregoing letter, if it should evoke any comment at all, betrays a situation having characteristics not uncommon to-day. Every open door of opportunity before the Church tempts to an overdrawn appeal, particularly on the part of those who have had a short or superficial view of conditions, and the “many adversaries,” or difficulties in the way, are ignored or minimized. The Church papers of that day contained no end of appeals on behalf of Texas, the one used above being one of the most conservative among a great number at hand. In a former communication Mr. Stevens had argued that Texas was the key to Mexico and to the whole of Latin America. Another enthusiastic advocate pleads for the immediate winning of Texas, as it would mean possession of the whole western part of the country “to the Pacific ocean.” It may be needless to say that the score of missionaries which Mr. Stevens understood was soon to be dispatched by another denomination did not come. Other Mission Boards, like our own, could respond only to the extent of their funds.



In March, 1839, Joseph P. Sneed, the last of the new recruits appointed for that year, arrived in Texas. Mr. Fowler appointed him to Montgomery circuit, while Strickland was sent to the assistance of Jesse Hord in the lower country. But these scattered forces now on the field, few as they were, were soon to suffer depletion. Stevens, as we have seen, left for the North in June. Isaac L. G. Strickland, though a young man and devoted to his work, as the summer came on was stricken with fever and soon afterwards succumbed, dying at Columbia, where he had recently organized a church. His end came at the house of Mrs. Bell, mentioned in Hord's journal. He was buried under a live-oak tree in the family burying-ground on the Bell plantation. But some years later a little church was built at Chance's Prairie, and named in his honor Strickland Chapel, and his remains were removed to the church-yard, and a modest monument erected to his memory. Isaac L. G. Strickland was admitted into the Tennessee Conference, held at Pulaski, Tenn., in November, 1833. He traveled in connection with that conference until his transfer to the Texas Mission in 1838. He was thirty years of age at the time of his death.

J. P. Sneed had preached in Texas, as we have seen, as early as 1834, while on a circuit in Louisiana. He was born in Davidson County, Tenn., in 1804. His mother was a member of the Baptist church, and died when he was eight years of age. Though he was much attached to her he says that he did not remember any religious instruction or show of concern on her part for the religious welfare of her children. His father was reared in the Protestant Episcopal Church, but professed to be an unbeliever, although he exhorted his children "to read the Bible." It is very remarkable, under the circumstances, that there went forth from this family three Methodist preachers—Nicholas T., a pioneer in Alabama Methodism; Joseph P., and George W., both of whom

preached and finished their course in Texas. The Sneed boys early came under the influence of Methodist preachers about Nashville, and Joseph P. was converted at the age of twenty. In 1826, having removed to Tuscaloosa, Ala., he was licensed to preach, and in 1829 admitted on trial into the Mississippi Conference. He served charges in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana—all of which territory was included then in the Mississippi Conference, until he received his appointment to Texas in the fall of 1838. He visited his old home in Tennessee before starting for Texas, and on January 1, 1839, he set out on horseback for his new field of labor. He crossed the Texas border early in February, having ridden more than eight hundred miles as he found it by the course he came. Mr. Sneed at once proceeded to the McMahan settlement, where he had assisted in a meeting in 1834, and here he found Mr. Fowler, superintendent of the Texas district. Fowler and his wife joined Sneed, and together they set out for the west. They picked up Strickland on the Montgomery circuit, and proceeded to Washington and to Center Hill, where they were joined by Stevens. Here in conference the readjustments were made which have been noted—Strickland to join with Hord on his work; Stevens on the Washington circuit; Alexander on the new Ruttersville circuit, and Sneed to return and take charge of the Montgomery circuit. Montgomery circuit at this time embraced all the territory between the Trinity and Brazos rivers, “from Cypress Creek on the south to the Old San Antonio Road on the north,” or to the borders of the Indian country. Sneed first “had only eleven appointments,” but in June Mr. Fowler summoned him to another conference at Independence, Washington County, where another readjustment had to be made, due to the decision of Mr. Stevens to vacate the Washington circuit and return to the North. At this conference the Washington circuit, embracing the larger part of Washington, Austin and

Burleson counties, was joined to the Montgomery circuit, and Daniel Carl, a local preacher, was employed to assist Sneed. The instructions were, that each should follow the other and make a round in six weeks. Sneed, on his first round of exploration of his new territory, visited and consulted with Robert Alexander at Ruttersville, and he journeyed and preached as far as Bastrop, returning through Burleson County, where he was confined by sickness for some time at the home of Alexander Thomson. He observes that "this settlement is on the extreme frontier, and the family carry their guns to the field to guard against the Indians."

Returning to the Montgomery circuit, Sneed appointed a camp-meeting for the Robinson settlement in September, the first ever held between the Trinity and Brazos rivers. At this meeting the preachers present were J. P. Sneed, Jesse Hord, Robert Crawford and R. Hill. The occasion was one of great interest, and attracted for that day an unusual congregation of three hundred people. Twenty-seven members were added to the church. Mr. Sneed records that "the Lord has abundantly blessed us. I think it is the best for order and the universal outpouring of the Spirit I ever saw." A quarterly meeting had been appointed for this time and place, which was convened by Sneed, but owing to the absence of Fowler the conference was adjourned. A regular quarterly meeting was held here on November 3.<sup>5</sup> Fowler was not present, and Sneed conducted the business. At this conference Daniel Carl was recommended to the Mississippi Conference for admission on trial.

The Robinson settlement, located in Walker County, about eight miles below the present town of Huntsville, is entitled to more than passing notice, as it became one

<sup>5</sup> The author is indebted to Rev. E. L. Shettles for the quarterly conference record books for Montgomery circuit, containing the complete records for this charge, from the first quarterly meeting held on Feb. 25, 1839. Some interesting extracts will be made from these in subsequent chapters.

of the early strongholds of Methodism. William Robinson from Tennessee, afterwards a local preacher, had settled here in 1830 or 1831 with a large family. Bishop Morris, who visited Texas in the winter of 1841-42, preached in this settlement, and says of the Robinson family then: "This old brother has lived here eleven years on a league of land obtained by headright; has a wife and ten children in Texas, all members of our church, and twenty-two grandchildren, who are natives of Texas, and four out of five sons-in-law are also Methodists—the whole family a most interesting family."<sup>4</sup> A famous camp-ground was established at Robinson's, beginning with the Sneed meeting of 1839, and the Texas Conference held its session here in 1843.

Two other successful revivals were held in the fall of 1839 on Montgomery circuit, one in the Lindley neighborhood and the other at Thanthorp's, where the town of Anderson now stands, and Sneed closed his labors of that year with thirteen appointments and four organized societies. A camp-meeting of greater historical interest than any of those mentioned was held by Sneed within the bounds of the Washington circuit, and known as the "Centenary Camp-meeting," in celebration of the centenary of the founding of Methodism. Sneed's account of this meeting is as follows:<sup>5</sup>

Thursday, October 24, 1839, our centenary meeting began at New Year's camp-ground, about eight miles southwest of Independence, half a mile below the road to San Felipe, on the west side of the creek, within half a mile of the old camp-ground—the first meeting of the kind I believe ever held in Texas [referring to the old camp-ground and the meeting of 1834 and years following].

The centenary commenced with a class-meeting and the Lord

<sup>4</sup> T. A. Morris, *Miscellany*, p. 332.

<sup>5</sup> Thrall is in error in fixing this meeting "in the bounds of Mr. Alexander's circuit," and in other particulars, Thrall, p. 65. O. M. Addison says Thrall "has counfounded this meeting with one held a year or two later, both of which it was the privilege of the writer to attend."



was present to bless. I felt comfortable, and thankful that God had permitted me to attend this celebration. No travelling preacher but myself was present at the class-meeting. Our superintendent, Bro. Fowler, was sick at San Augustine, and the two brothers appointed to deliver addresses, R. Alexander and Jesse Hord, were also sick. The meeting was commenced under unfavorable circumstances, but the Lord was with us indeed. Brother Alexander was with us on Sunday and delivered his address on "The Rise of Methodism," with some good effect. A collection was taken up, amounting in money and subscription to \$900.

The meeting was attended by people from Velasco, Texana, Bastrop, near Nashville, Trinity and San Jacinto. The Lord blessed us abundantly. Thirty-seven whites joined, and a good many colored, and equally that number were converted.

We will now see the preachers off to conference, to be held at Natchez, Miss., on December 4, which is the last time those in Texas will have to make the long journey beyond the bounds of the Republic in order to attend conference. All of them except Hord and Sneed took the overland route horseback. As conference time approached Hord was in Houston, convalescing from sickness, and he had determined to go to Natchez by boat. Sneed had made a final round of Hord's circuit for him, and reached Houston in time to accompany him to conference. Referring to Hord's journal here we have an interesting account of the first part of their trip, from Houston to Galveston:<sup>6</sup>

The steamer was crowded, yet Bro. Sneed secured a double berth for us; in the one he placed me and his own affects in the other. There is one thing which perhaps I should mention: at this time the yellow fever was epidemic in Houston, of which we were apprised before our arrival, and the fact reflects favorably on the character and heroism of J. P. Sneed, as he could have gone without entering an infected city. The most of the

<sup>6</sup> This account from MS. Life of J. P. Sneed, prepared by O. M. Addison, but never published.



passengers were young adventurers, who had left the United States to help Texas in her struggle for national liberty. They were a wild, reckless, noisy set of inebriates. They danced, sung, shouted and blasphemed. That boat's saloon was a pandemonium. Our brother Sneed went round about them cautiously and at every opportunity would politely ask one here, and another there, to try and suppress the noise, adding as a reason that there was a sick preacher aboard. This was enough. A new theme was given, a new thought. Soon everywhere could be heard, "Jonah's aboard Jonah's aboard We'll go to the bottom to-night." . . . Soon after midnight a storm from the north struck the boat with overwhelming force. In less than an hour that boat plowed, rolled, tumbled, pitched and groaned at every joint, as if every piece of timber were leaving its fellow, while within and without was a storm of noise that beggars description. Without, the angry billows foamed and dashed; the wind howled and the thunder roared amid the frantic glare of the lightning. Within the scene was equally indescribable. Some uttered yells of despair; some exclamations of Lost Lost; others were thrown into spasms, while others prayed as for life. Such a storm and such a scene I have never before nor since witnessed. But thanks be to God that amid its raging there were some calm and quiet on the boat. The morning came; the wrath and bellying of the storm were hushed, and a more beautiful and brilliant sun never rose to brighten earth and to sparkle upon rippling waters than did that morning as we steamed into Galveston and anchored safely at its wharf.

From Mr. Sneed's journal the following is a continuation of the story:

Landed at Galveston at 10 a. m., and find none to comfort us. It is raining and a norther is blowing, and there is scarcely a fire-place in the city. There is one tavern where there is some accommodation, but no fire for us. At 2 p. m. we left the steamer to try the tavern. The steamship Columbia is lying off, but will not take us on board. I have tried several places to get Bro. Hord some fire; the people seem to live without fire. There are only two fireplaces in this large house; the ladies occupy one, and the other is the kitchen fire. After hard work

and the assistance of a gentleman, on making Bro. Hord's situation known to the tavern-keeper, and by consent of the ladies, he had the privilege of the lady's parlor; the rest of us scarcely see fire.

Two days and a half were thus uncomfortably passed, one of them spent by Mr. Sneed in bed to keep warm, waiting for the moderation of the weather. The sea becoming smooth enough to cross the bar, on Saturday afternoon the preachers embarked on the *Columbia* for New Orleans, which they reached after three days of rough passage. Here, as in Galveston, the Texas preachers were not only without acquaintances and friends, but found themselves short of funds. We will here let Mr. Hord again take up the tale:

Our trip across the Gulf was under a prevailing norther, with much rain, but we reached the city in safety. Bro. Sneed went ashore and learned that our baggage had to pass through the custom-house; duties were to be paid, and he returned to inform me, which he did with a cheerful smile, as if the thought that the Lord would provide reigned within.

"How much is required?"

"Fifty cents."

"Well, here it is; the last cent."

Sad hour with me; sick; no money, in New Orleans, and hundreds of miles from home. Sneed took the fifty cents and entered the custom-house, and soon had written permission to carry ashore what two pairs of saddle-wallets could contain: Bible, Hymn-Book and Discipline, with a few well-worn garments. He now awoke to a true sense of our condition, and went into the city in quest of the stationed preacher, Rev. W——, with whom he was acquainted. He soon met him, and made known our condition, wants, &c., to which the answer was promptly given, "*I can do nothing for you.*" Sneed immediately returned to me on the boat. He appeared calm and thoughtful, with no sign of agitation or despondency. During his absence a news-boy came aboard to distribute the city papers, one of which I was reading, or rather vacantly looking over on Sneed's return.

“Well, what’s to be done,” said he.

“Take this paper,” said I, and pointing out the card of a cotton-factor, go to him and tell him all about our situation. He found the place—that total stranger calmly heard his statement, made some figuring on a slip of paper, and handing it to Sneed said, “Get a hack and carry your friend to this number, on such a street.” Before long he was back, as happy as he could be with the good news, and soon had his sick friend with two pairs of saddle-bags rolling for No. — on ——— Street, into which we were ushered and found it such a home as would make any sick or sad man happy. Glory to God for a special providence He will provide.

With this lovely Christian family we spent two days, until a boat could be had going up the river. The time came to leave, and our kind host said, “How much money will you need?” We answered ten dollars each. He replied, “Accidents sometimes occur on these boats; take twenty each,” at the same time handing us the money, which with grateful hearts we accepted. This generous man’s name has passed from my mind for many years, but his kindness still lives within me. In a few days we were in Natchez, amid the engaging busy scenes of the Conference. While here we borrowed money, remitted forty dollars to our kind benefactor in New Orleans, and bought us each a horse, resolving to return to Texas by land.

Shall we insert the name of the stationed preacher in New Orleans, seeing that Bro. Hord does not do so? We will let the reader, if he is interested enough to do so, look it up in the appointments of the Mississippi Conference for 1838. We would like to inscribe here the number and the street and the benefactor whom these preachers subsequently found in New Orleans, but it is impossible to do so, since Hord himself was unable to recall them. But there is a Book of Record where all these matters are doubtless enrolled.

The conference at Natchez elected delegates to the General Conference, to be held the following year, and in this election Littleton Fowler was chosen an alternate. Applicants for admission on trial from Texas were

Daniel Carl, Henderson D. Palmer, Robert Crawford, and Robert H. Hill. These were duly admitted and all returned to Texas in the appointments. The conference statistics show 750 white members and 43 colored in the Texas district. In a report, transmitted to the Board of Missions in August, 1839, covering about three-fourths of the conference year, the superintendent, Littleton Fowler, gives the distribution of the membership then enrolled, with other details, as follows: Jasper, 50 members, 2 local preachers, no Sabbath school; San Augustine, 207 members, 7 local preachers, no Sabbath school; Montgomery, 57 white members, 3 colored members, 1 local preacher, no Sabbath school; Washington, 178 members, 2 local preachers, 3 Sabbath schools; Ruttersville, 50 members, 4 local preachers, 1 Sabbath school; Brazoria (formerly called Houston circuit), 120 members, 2 local preachers, no Sabbath school.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE YEAR 1840

AT the Mississippi Conference in 1839 the Republic of Texas was divided into two vast districts, with a list of appointments reaching to quite respectable proportions. Surely we are growing, and Texas cannot much longer continue as a remote corner of missionary territory attached to another conference.

The appointments made in 1839 were as follows:

#### East Texas District—

Littleton Fowler, Presiding Elder.  
San Augustine, S. A. Williams.  
Jasper, Daniel Carl.  
Nacogdoches, Francis Wilson.  
Crockett, Henderson D. Palmer.  
Montgomery, Moses Spear, Robert Crawford.  
Harrison Circuit, to be supplied.

#### Rutersville District—

Robert Alexander, Presiding Elder.  
Rutersville, C. Richardson, and President of Rutersville College.  
Austin, John Haynie.  
Matagorda, Robert Hill.  
Brazoria, Abel Stevens.  
Victoria, to be supplied.  
Houston, Edward Fontaine.  
Galveston, Thos. O. Summers.  
Washington, Jesse Hord, J. Lewis.  
Nashville, Joseph P. Sneed.

Texas, it is well to note, had already become a productive field, as five of the preachers in the above list had



gone up for admission from this territory; namely, Carl, Palmer, Crawford, Haynie and Hill. Henderson D. Palmer, after spending some time at Lagrange College, Tuscumbia, Ala., came to Texas and engaged in teaching at Nacogdoches. Under the ministry of Littleton Fowler he first became a class-leader in the church, and later was granted license to preach. He is said to have been the first man licensed to preach in Texas.<sup>1</sup> Daniel Carl was a native of New York, where he was born in 1808. He removed with his parents in childhood to Tennessee. In 1837 he came to Texas, and engaged in teaching in Washington County. He was a tutor in the family of William Kesse at Cedar Creek, when under the influence of Fowler he yielded to a call to preach and was granted license. Robert Crawford, the best known of these first Texas recruits, is to enjoy with Alexander, Sneed and Hord, a ministry extending into the modern period of our history. He was a native of South Carolina, where he was born May 31, 1815. He was reared, like Alexander, in a staunch Calvinistic faith, but at the age of nineteen he was soundly converted and united with the Methodists. He was making preparations to enter Lagrange College, under a call to the ministry, when the Texas revolution attracted him, and in company with many other young men from Tennessee, where he was then living, Crawford came to Texas and joined the army of Sam Houston. He was present and took part in the battle of San Jacinto. After the war he again turned his thoughts toward the ministry. He was licensed to exhort by Dr. Martin Ruter at Washington in March, 1838, and was licensed to preach by J. P. Sneed in September, 1839. For the rest, both as to Crawford and the others, their history will be found interwoven with others in this book.

Austin, the new capital of the Republic, appears for

<sup>1</sup> From a very brief and imperfect memoir in Journal of Trinity Conference, 1869.

the first time in the appointments. The commissioners which had been designated by Congress to select a new capital, in aiming at the geographical center of the country, had agreed upon a picturesque spot on the Colorado; but they had really located the capital in the Indian country, beyond the borders of the settlements. The nearest settlement and Methodist preaching place was Bastrop, thirty-five miles down the river. Toward the north and west there was nothing but the Indian and the buffalo. San Antonio was eighty miles to the southwest, with nothing between. However, the dauntless faith of the pioneers in the future development of the country and the hardihood of the early settlers held the day, and Austin remained the seat of government. Town lots were blocked off and sold in August, 1839, and by November Congress and the public officials were transacting the business of a nation in this frontier post. And in December John Haynie was appointed to Austin, his circuit to include Travis and Bastrop counties.

John Haynie had removed to Texas in January, 1839, and settled in the region embraced in his first circuit. He had been a local preacher in Tennessee and Alabama for many years, and though now past fifty he had yet many effective years before him in the itinerant ranks.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> John Haynie was born in Virginia, April 7, 1786. In infancy he was consecrated in baptism in the Episcopal Church, of which his parents were members. The family removed to East Tennessee, near Knoxville, while he was young, and subsequently his parents united with the Methodist Church. In his twentieth year he was married to Elizabeth Brooks. "On the 9th of August, 1809," Haynie says, "I rode out to the field to shoot some squirrels, and while trying to get a shot at one suddenly this thought struck me with force—'There is one who watches all your actions with more care than you watch that squirrel.' Instantly all my sins passed in review before me. I had at the same moment such a view of the holiness of God as I never had before. My limbs trembled; immediately I clasped my hands together and cried for mercy." He returned home in such great distress of mind that a fever ensued which threatened to cut short his life. He was at one time tempted to commit suicide. Soon thereafter while in the field on his knees in an agony of prayer he was gloriously converted. In the same year while attending church he joined and had his wife's name put down, "as we always go the same way," he said. He went home and told her what he had done. She was struck with conviction, and about a week later was converted while the family were at prayer. In June, 1811, Haynie was licensed to preach. In 1815 he located in

"I gathered up the scattered members in town and country, having formed a few societies in a two weeks circuit," he says in his journal, referring to the year spent on the Austin circuit. "I placed the Sabbath preaching in Austin and Bastrop, and filled up the intermediate ground in the week. The Indians were quite troublesome this year on my circuit. They were frequently before me and behind, within a few hours, killing the people and stealing horses. I frequently saw their tracks in my path. I was often pressed to carry arms, but I trusted in the Lord. In the spring when I was from home the Indians went down and stole all my work horses, and left us with only the horse I rode. As there were no ferries on the Colorado river above Bastrop, I was compelled to swim the river to meet my appointments. Corn was \$3 per bushel, and with the exception of three places on my circuit I do not think my horse was put up and fed during the whole year. The way I managed was this: when I drew near my stopping place or place to preach I tied him to grass, as I always carried a lariat for that purpose, and thus night and day attended to him myself." At the close of this year Haynie reported for this circuit three organized classes, with sixty-seven white and four colored members, besides various appointments where he had not formed societies. Austin had fourteen members, with David Thomas leader; Bastrop, thirty-two whites and four colored members, C. Anderson, leader; Moore's Fort, twenty-one whites and one colored, Wm. Thorp, leader. "At Austin the prospects of a revival had been destroyed by a dancing school."

In 1839-40 began the realization of the dream of Dr.

Knoxville. He was chiefly instrumental in the erection of the first Methodist church in that city. One of the trustees of this church was John Meniffee, whose children and grandchildren have figured so largely in Texas Methodist history. Haynie spent fifteen years in Knoxville in the mercantile business, and fourteen years at Tuscumbia, Ala., whence he removed to Texas.

Ruter in the founding of a literary institution for Methodists in Texas. In his brief survey of the country in 1837-38 the Doctor became inclined toward Bastrop as the location of the future institution, which he came to refer to as Bastrop University. Like the commissioners who located the capital of the Republic, he had an eye to the future development of the country, and he wanted to plant the school near the geographical center. The site chosen, however, after the Doctor's death, was one lower down in the settled portion of the country. Robert Alexander, John Rabb, J. W. Kenney and a few others selected a spot in Fayette County, about four miles from the present town of Lagrange, and in 1838 laid out the town of Rutersville<sup>3</sup> as the future college town for Texas Methodism. A petition was presented to Congress for a charter for the proposed institution, but this application was rejected. In the spring of 1839 Rev. Chauncey Richardson, then president of Tusculum Female College, Alabama, visited Texas and looked over the situation at Rutersville. He was elected president of the college-to-be, and his wife chosen preceptress, to commence their labors in January of the following year. Early in November, 1839, the president arrived on the ground, and, as shown by the appointments above, his selection was confirmed by the Mississippi Conference in December. Dr. Richardson's first task was to prepare a charter, which he did, and proceeding to Austin he secured its passage, though in a modified and a very defective form. Congress granted four leagues of land, amounting to 17,776 acres, to the college, but limited its property holdings to twenty-five thousand dollars, and set a limit upon its corporate existence of "ten years and no longer." Within a year or two these provisions were amended, allowing property holdings of one hundred thousand

<sup>3</sup> Rutersville and Ruterville are both used indiscriminately in present day references to this old town and the college of that name; but contemporary usage favors Rutersville.

dollars, over and above necessary buildings, and extending its life to ninety-nine years.<sup>4</sup> The name adopted for the new institution was Ruttersville College. It was intended to open the school in January, 1840, but "neither of the buildings being ready for occupancy, the opening was deferred to the first of February, when both departments [Male and Female] were opened in one small building, with about twenty-five students in attendance."<sup>5</sup> The first faculty was composed of Chauncey Richardson, A. M., president; Charles W. Thomas, A. B., tutor, and Martha G. Richardson, preceptress. In May, 1840, the trustees met and organized under the provisions of the charter. At this meeting the president was appointed agent, to travel and secure funds for the institution, and Rev. D. N. V. Sullivan was appointed to supply his place in the school. Dr. Richardson's success was "unparalleled," in the language of the Report, quoted above, "and as a result a beautiful and commodious college building has been completed [1843], the building of the female department finished (or nearly so) and other improvements essential to the prosperity of the college, besides about twenty-five thousand acres of land, nearly two thousand dollars in notes, and some fifty town lots have been secured." Of this princely endowment of lands the Congress of Texas, as we have noted, gave four leagues, and the town of Ruttersville gave for the college site fifty-two acres, and for the female department, twenty-four acres.

And so, with the greatest promise, the first educational institution of college ambitions is launched in Texas,<sup>6</sup> opening its doors eleven months "to a day"

<sup>4</sup> C. C. Cody, in various articles on our educational institutions.

<sup>5</sup> Historical statement by Board of Trustees, 1843.

<sup>6</sup> Baylor University was chartered Feb. 1, 1845, and opened at Independence in 1846. In later years its name and chartered rights were taken over by Waco University, and the institution at Independence ceased to exist. . . . Land grants were made by Congress in 1839 for two universities to be established by the Republic, but no further steps were taken until 1856, when further grants were made and provisions adopted for the founding of one State university. The present institution opened its doors in 1883.



before a Methodist conference was organized in Texas. Happy in its location, prospectively rich in lands, and fortunate in its choice of its first head and guiding spirit, Rutgersville College is to run well—for a while. Its subsequent fortunes will be noted in due time.

Rev. Chauncey Richardson, first president of the first college in Texas, was a prominent figure in the country from the day of his arrival. Born in Vermont in 1802, of Methodist parents, he entered the Church at the age of nineteen, and was licensed to preach at the age of twenty-one by Dr. Wilbur Fisk, presiding elder of the Vermont district. He filled circuits and stations in New England until 1832, when by reason of failing health he was forced to locate. He entered and spent some time in Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., of which Dr. Fisk had become president. Subsequently he was called to the presidency of Tuscumbia Female College, Alabama, which place he filled with great acceptability and success until he was elected president of Rutgersville College. As a member of the Tennessee Conference, which he had joined on coming South, Mr. Richardson had attained prominence as a preacher and educator, and he brought with him to the infant institution in Texas a reputation and prestige which inspired confidence from the first. Mr. Richardson's impressions and expectations of the new college in Texas were as favorable as were those of the Texas Methodists of him. In a letter following his first visit to Rutgersville the following extract is taken: <sup>7</sup>

The country between San Felipe, on the Brazos, and La-Grange, on the Colorado, in point of beauty of landscape, scenery and fertility of soil, excellent water, and salubrious breezes, will not suffer in comparison with any country of equal extent. The surface is undulating, and from the summit of each swell a prospect of inimitable beauty and richness is presented to the eye of the traveller. The most beautiful portion of this rich and

<sup>7</sup> Published in the N. Y. Ch. Adv. and Journal, 1839.

romantic country embraces Rutersville and its vicinity. At this new and flourishing town I was kindly entertained by Rev. Dr. Manly, from whom I received much information respecting the plan of the town and its prospective importance. The League embraced in this town was the choice of the proprietors out of a great number which they examined. It contains numerous romantic lots for family residences and public buildings. The college site commands an extensive view of the richest landscape scenery in the world. It is ornamented with a rich oak grove and macadamized with nature's own hand with a stratum of quartz pebbles of several inches in depth. The college campus will be most beautiful without any polish from the hand of man. . . . During my detention in Rutersville I became acquainted with several of its citizens, with whom I was highly pleased. Indeed the more I saw of this town the better I liked it, and I consider it a very eligible location for the literary institution of our church in Texas. It is literally the heart of Texas, and by the blessings of God, it can be made so morally, evolving the fountain of sanctified literature, and diffusing it through thousands of channels throughout the length and breadth of the Republic, making it like the garden of the Lord.

Taking now a brief survey of other work going on in the west, or in the Rutersville district, in 1840, we note that the vast coast country through which Jesse Hord had splashed on horseback the year before is now divided into five appointments—Matagorda, Brazoria, Victoria, Houston and Galveston. Abel Stevens, who had been appointed to Brazoria, never returned to Texas. The Brazoria circuit was supplied a few months during the winter by Orceneth Fisher, of Illinois, who had come to Texas to look over the country and for his health. He returned to Illinois in the spring, but had made up his mind to cast his lot in Texas, which he did at a later day. The Brazoria circuit was left vacant during the remainder of the year. Victoria, on the western border, was left in the appointments "to be supplied," and so it remained through the year, notwithstanding loud and

repeated calls from that section for a preacher. Both Houston and Galveston were for the first half of the year under the care of Edward Fontaine, a young man from Mississippi, who had been appointed to Houston only, but as Dr. Summers did not arrive in Galveston until June that city was joined to Houston. Alexander, the presiding elder, devoted much attention to these rising young cities, and in company with Fontaine he held a meeting in Galveston, organized a church there, and accepted lots for a church from the founders of the town. After the arrival of Dr. Summers, Fontaine confined his labors to Houston, but some time during the year he surrendered his charge and passed into the ranks of the Episcopal clergy, and Houston and Galveston are again joined together, this time under Summers. Thomas O. Summers was put down for Galveston "against the judgment of the Bishop, who thought the work in Texas too rough" for one of Summers's antecedents and culture, but Summers proved himself perfectly adaptable to the conditions of his new charge. He came to Texas from Baltimore, where he had remained after his appointment until after the sessions of the General Conference of 1840, which met in Baltimore, when he departed for Galveston. Summers labored in Galveston and Houston until 1844, and he may be justly regarded as the father of Methodism in these cities. He also took an active interest in the work of the Church throughout the Republic, of which, as well as the work in his own charge, more will be said.

Rutersville district, which Robert Alexander travels this year, extended from Galveston to the upper limits of the new Nashville mission, embracing the territory about the falls of the Brazos, or the present town of Marlin, and the district extended westward to include Matagorda, Victoria and Austin. Alexander took Hord with him on one trip to the Nashville mission, and the latter records an incident or two which occurred:

I remember going with Bro. Alexander to the San Antonio Prairie to attend a quarterly meeting. We reached the settlement about night, and lodged, I think, with a Bro. King. Had some religious services on Saturday. Bro. K. invited me to his house to spend the second night. I declined, saying I wished to go to a house with more air holes. A gentleman present said, "Go with me; I can accommodate you." I accepted, and that night I enjoyed a lone bed between two open doors, where I had a full supply of oxygen. . . . Sometime about midnight or after I was aroused by a call in front. I arose to enquire the cause. I was informed the Indians had attacked the settlement, killed one man and perhaps carried off the family, and this messenger was out gathering help. All were aroused. Men and strong boys, with all the implements of death at command were off in hot pursuit. Its finale I cannot give, for I was sick, and have no knowledge of the events of the Sabbath day following.

On Monday Mr. Hord, finding himself too ill to continue up the country, set out for home, forty miles distant, leaving Alexander and Sneed on the Nashville mission. The Indian alarm referred to was caused by an incursion made by the savages on an outside settlement, where they had murdered a Mr. Tidwell and his children, and carried his wife away captive. The Indians were not overhauled, but escaped with the woman. Several years later Mrs. Tidwell was found and purchased from the Indians at Coffee's trading house on Red River.

The Nashville mission in 1840 embraced twelve appointments, lying within the territory now covered by Burleson, Milam and Falls counties, on the west side of the Brazos, and Brazos and Robertson counties on the east side of the river—this entire section, with much other territory being included in the original Robertson colony, or the Nashville Company's grant. The point at which the quarterly meeting referred to above was held, and near which the Indian raid had occurred, was San

Antonio Prairie, located six or seven miles northeast of the present town of Caldwell. The first Methodist family which settled in this region was the Addison family, coming from Baltimore in 1835. Some of the history and experiences of this family have already been given. The following from O. M. Addison bears upon the early religious advantages and the rise of Methodism in this frontier community:

As soon as his house was built the writer's father invited his neighbors to send their children to it on Sabbath morning, which with his own he formed into and taught the first Sunday school in Texas west of the Brazos and north of the San Antonio road. As other settlers soon after came in the school was removed to Mrs. Scott's, as a more central point. From that place it eventually found more suitable quarters at Elizabeth Chapel.

An adjoining neighborhood, some seven miles south, known as the Post Oak settlement, was composed of Baptists—honest, simple minded and pious people. There were but few Baptists preachers in Texas at that time, and the Post Oak settlement for awhile remained without the gospel. As the exclusiveness that now so widely separates the people of this faith had not yet been inaugurated, the destitution was to some extent supplied by social meetings among themselves and with their Methodist neighbors. About this time there came to Washington county a gentleman owning a negro slave, "Uncle Mark," a Methodist local preacher. These guileless Baptists, hungering for the true word, engaged from his master the services of this negro preacher, who for some time gave them a regular monthly appointment. The first time the writer heard "Uncle Mark" was on one of these occasions. . . . With a younger brother he walked seven miles to Mrs. Katie Smith's, whose best room was improvised into a chapel for the occasion. "Uncle Mark" was coal black, with a serious cast of countenance and a wide forehead. He was grave and dignified, and his manner becoming and impressive. He read his opening hymn with marked emphasis and correctness. It was one of Cowper's, beginning:



Lord, we are vile, conceived in sin,  
 And born unholy and unclean;  
 Sprung from the man whose guilty fall  
 Corrupts his race and taints us all.

The preacher has long since gone to his reward. He proved faithful to his earthly as well as to his heavenly Master. Meek and obedient, he won the respect of all who knew him. Some years before his death he was purchased from his master by the church and left free to dispose of his time and preach as he might determine.

One word more about "John Mark." From an obituary notice by R. Alexander, published in 1879, the year of the colored preacher's death, we gather that the "deed" to John Mark was first held by a Masonic lodge, but on the request of Mark himself, who wanted the Church to be his master, the Texas Annual Conference, aided by several generous Methodists, purchased him and held the deed. To the day of his death, we are told, John Mark occupied his time in a faithful and fruitful ministry to his own people. He had been ordained deacon by Bishop Paine.

From the Addison memorials we learn that the first Methodist church in the Robertson colony section was organized by Robert Alexander at the house of J. W. Porter, on the San Antonio Prairie, a year or two before the arrival of Mr. Sneed—the exact date not given. This church was composed of the following members: H. B. King, Susan King, John E. King, Rachel King, Peter Jackson, Susan Jackson, Elizabeth Scott, Jas. W. Scott, Patsy Scott, Philip B. Scott, Robert Scott, Isaac S. Addison, Sarah Addison, Joseph J. Addison. From the families which constituted this organization—which was housed after a few years in Elizabeth Chapel, named after Mrs. Elizabeth Scott—there went forth the following Methodist preachers in Texas: James W. Scott, Oscar M. Addison, James H. Addison, John W. Addison,

John E. King, Rufus Y. King, Willis J. King, Milton H. Porter, John Porter, and from the Scott's of the second generation, J. Fred Cox. It is not discoverable thus far that any community of Methodists in Texas has contributed so many of her sons to the itinerancy as did this one.

There came to be planted at an early day in this settlement one of the famous camp-grounds of the country, the old Waugh Camp-ground, located upon ten acres of ground donated by Isaac S. Addison. Nearly all the early preachers of the Church ministered here at different times, and many of the later preachers were converted here, besides hundreds of others. B. H. Carroll, one of the great Baptist preachers of Texas, was converted here "at two o'clock in the morning," having tarried, as was not uncommon in that day, until that hour, attended by the Methodist preachers in charge and a few saintly women.

This, then, was one of the points on the Nashville mission in 1840. The other appointments, which we decipher from a faded "plan" of the work, made out by Sneed himself that year, were: Nashville, Tenoxtitlan, Mount Prairie, Mrs. Smith's, Irish Settlements, Wheelock's, Franklin, Timmons on Navisot, Falls of Brazos, Stroud's, and Yellow Prairie. An extract from Sneed's journal relates to his visit to the Falls of the Brazos:

Mondy, March 4, 1840. Rode with Mr. Porter from Franklin toward the falls of the Brazos, ten miles west of Mr. Stroud's, thence northwest up the river, passing one house and overtaking Mr. Porter's wagon near the Little Brazos, we encamped in the bottom. We kept guard all night to prevent being surprised by the Indians. The wolves howled around us, but I slept very soundly, waking but seldom. The Lord preserved us, and the next day we reached Fort Milam, five miles from the falls of the Brazos, where I preached at night from Matt. 4-17. The garrison was commanded by Captain Holliday, one of Fannin's

men, who gave me the account of his escape from the massacre at Goliad.

There was a considerable settlement about the Falls of the Brazos, under the protection of the garrison at Fort Milam, but we have no record of any organization as yet attempted so far on the frontier.

Before turning from the Ruttersville district we will add a report from the presiding elder, Robert Alexander, written to the Missionary Secretary in New York from Galveston on March 16, 1840:

I have performed my first round on Ruttersville district, and embrace the present opportunity of making a brief statement of our prospects and necessities in this very interesting field of ministerial labor. In this district we have seven circuits and one station as arranged by the bishop and his council, and circumstances seem to require the addition of another. These appointments are scattered over an extensive territory, including more than half of the settled portion of the republic, and the work is very laborious.

The preachers in their respective circuits are truly in the spirit of their work, and do not seem to regard the difficulties and privation with which they have to contend, but rather esteem it a privilege to range these wilds in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and regard the swimming of creeks and rivers and sleeping alone in the prairies, surrounded by howling wolves and beasts of prey, as very trivial circumstances, while the people appear hungry for the bread of life. Frequently they publish the gospel to some who have grown up in this country—to men and women who never before heard the gospel, and to others who once belonged to the church and enjoyed religious privileges but have long been deprived of the privileges they once enjoyed. These are grateful to God that they again have these privileges.

Our quarterly meetings have been well attended, except when the weather was so rainy or disagreeable that the people could not attend with any comfort. We have had some truly interesting meetings, and some have found the pearl of great price,

and many others appear truly penitent. More than 100 members have been added to the church in this district by letter or on probation. Our prospects indeed are truly encouraging, though it is deeply to be regretted that some very important points are yet destitute. Victoria is not supplied, though I have made every effort in my power to get a supply, but have failed. We have a number of members scattered in that portion of country, but are as sheep having no shepherd, and every time I hear from them their request for help becomes louder and more importunate. They say, Send us a minister; we will do all we can to make him comfortable and to give him a support, but we have none to give. "Lord of the harvest, hear thy needy children's cry."

Brother O. Fisher, of the Illinois Conference, came to this country last winter for his health, and he has labored efficiently on this circuit the past quarter; but he is compelled to return home, and Brazoria circuit is now destitute. This is an important point. The people are able to support their own preacher, and pledge themselves to do it, but we have none for them. Brother Fisher reports that the prospects on this circuit are encouraging. Shall it remain destitute?

Galveston has no Methodist preacher to take charge of the scattered members of our church in that city. The stationed preacher from Houston and myself held meetings here two days and preached to attentive hearers. We organized a church and a quarterly conference. When we collect all the scattered flock together we will have at least 30 members. Some have been faithful and zealous, and have held prayer and class-meetings, while others have grown cold in religion. On Sabbath the attendance was numerous, and never have I preached to more attentive hearers. Many wept and appeared to feel deeply, particularly at the communion table. It is cause of much regret that Galveston has not been supplied, as there is a population of about five thousand, and it is growing rapidly in every respect. The claims of the people are strong. They are willing to build us a church and to do all in their power to promote the best of all causes. Brother Summers, of the Baltimore Conference, has been looked for to take charge of this station, but we hear nothing from him. [Footnote: He will soon be on the way. N. Bangs.] I leave this place today for the interior to visit my

family and commence my second round of quarterly meetings. May the Lord of the harvest send us more help speedily.

Turning now to look over the East Texas district, we have a territory almost as large as that embraced in the western district, but having fewer appointments within its bounds. Crockett appears for the first time as a center of operations, this section filling an intermediate place between the east and the west. The newly created Harrison circuit indicates the extension of the work northward, toward the Red River country in northeastern Texas; and these two sections of Methodism are destined soon to unite and become one. One might suppose that along the East Texas line, far from the ground of the roving Comanches on the one hand, and the ever threatening Mexicans on the other, that peace and order might be found, where the institutions of civilization could grow up undisturbed. But conditions quite the contrary prevailed. The Cherokee Indians, occupying a section of ground in eastern Texas, and regarded as a "civilized tribe," became troublesome in 1839, which brought on the Cherokee War. But the Indians were not the only disturbers of the peace and safety of the inhabitants. The fact is, that certain sections of eastern Texas, particularly along the border, were the most lawless of any in the country. The climax of civil strife was reached in the "war" of the "Regulators and Moderators" in 1842-44. Dr. John H. McLean, whose grandfather emigrated to Texas in 1839, bringing his own widowed mother and her children with him, and settled in Harrison County, about eight miles east of Marshall, says in his "Reminiscences" that conditions in that day were unsettled and chaotic. "Law existed scarcely in name—still less in fact—while organized bands of thieves depredated upon the property rights of the early settlers, stealing horses, negroes, and other species of property. Should a thief be arrested and committed to the log jail, the clan would



liberate him by night and he would resume his depredations." Continuing, the narrator refers to measures adopted to restrain such gangs. The Capt. Rose referred to was Dr. McLean's grandfather.

Under this state of things Capt. Rose was chosen by the citizens to head an organization to rid the country of these lawless clans and characters. The inadequate protection of the law made it necessary for the citizens to organize in their own defense. This was not a mob, visiting summary punishment upon whom it might please, but a well organized company of reputable and responsible citizens, who, in case of an arrest for theft or other offense, gave the accused an impartial hearing, or trial, before a competent committee. If found guilty, he would receive the canonical number of stripes—"forty save one"—humanely administered with a hickory switch and the criminal would then be admonished to leave the country within ten days. If caught again and found guilty of like offense then might summary punishment be inflicted, but none were ever hanged—the flogging sufficed, and the criminal sought a more congenial clime. This organization has been improperly known as the "Regulators"—whereas the Regulators properly belonged to an organization in Shelby county. The best citizens were members of the Rose organization. The writer recalls Rev. James Gill, a local Methodist preacher, as a member, who was a most exemplary man and citizen, who died not many years since at Tyler.

The lawless spirit of the times often invaded the sacred precincts of religious meetings, and sometimes manifested itself in acts of the most shocking sacrilege. Dr. McLean relates the incident of a district judge who, in a drunken spree, administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in a saloon to several lawyers, using whisky and crackers for the elements. We have seen the quelling effect of a hickory stick in one of Robert Alexander's meetings in the west. Here in Harrison County on at least one occasion severer measures were resorted to in one of Littleton Fowler's meetings. While Fowler was conducting a camp-meeting near Marshall a drunken

desperado invaded a private tent while the occupants were attending service at the arbor near by, and began shooting up the tent and dishes on the table, one shot passing through the clothing of a servant girl with a babe in her arms, the intruder swearing all the while that he would kill the owners of the tent. The proprietor of the tent and others, hearing the disturbance, hastened to the scene, pistols in hand, and opened fire on the intruder, who ran to the arbor and fell wounded at the feet of Mr. Fowler, who at the time was calling penitents to the altar. The wounded man died next day.

The same tragic incident, with other interesting facts, is related by Dr. Job M. Baker, a local preacher who had settled in the country, and who was employed in 1840 by Fowler to supply the Harrison circuit. The following extract appears in Thrall:

In the year 1839 I moved my family to Harrison County. There was not a preacher of any kind in the county besides myself. I settled in the neighborhood of Mr. Page and his son-in-law, Mr. Josephus Moore, men of uneviable reputation. Mr. Page was an industrious, energetic man. He was hung by a company of "Regulators" from Red River County for an alleged murder. His family said the Indians committed the murder. I afterwards took the widow Page into the church, and baptized her by immersion. Her son John also became a useful church member. There was a good deal of horse and cattle stealing between the whites and Indians. The Indians stole from the whites and the whites stole from the Indians, as they said, by way of reprisals. It is hard to tell which party came out winner in this game, though I believe the whites a little more than held their own.

In the year 1839 the Cherokee war broke out. We moved into Fort Crawford, and for months had no flour, meat or coffee. We lived on corn pounded in a mortar. During this period I preached one sermon to a few hearers in Fort Crawford. At this time the war between the "Regulators" and "Moderators" was growing very bitter, and it was difficult to conduct religious services, though I occasionally had appointments to preach.

Dissatisfied with the sparse population and bad society, I moved down near the Louisiana line. . . . The first camp-meeting held in Harrison County was in the neighborhood of Mr. William Scott's, about five miles from Marshall. This meeting had a very beneficial influence. The next was held in the neighborhood of Jacob Booker's, a local preacher from East Tennessee. He lived near the Sabine river. One of his sons died in the itineracy. . . . While Mr. Fowler was presiding elder a second camp-meeting was held near William Scott's. It was progressing finely until a desperado came on the ground and created a disturbance on Sunday night. Mr. Scott remonstrated with him and reproved him. This only made him worse, and he swore he would kill Mr. Scott. He went to Marshall, got drunk, armed himself, and came back to execute his threat. While hunting for his intended victim he was himself shot and mortally wounded. This broke up the meeting. The preachers exhorted the wounded man to repent and prepare for death. At first the dying man was defiant, but before his death he became penitent and asked the preachers to pray for him.

Baker and two or three others who appear in this field this year merit more than a passing word of introduction. For a third of a century Baker's name appears, more or less irregularly, in the appointments of different conferences in Texas. But when we turn for information to the minutes of the conference in which he labored longest, and in which he died, we are disappointed. Here, for example, is the memoir of the man in question, appearing in the minutes of the East Texas Conference for 1878:

Job M. Baker died Feb. 5, 1878, at the home of his son, William, near Jefferson, Texas, aged 84 years and 20 days, having spent 60 years of his life in the ministry. Dr. Baker was of a high order of mind, well cultivated, and possessed of a large store of knowledge.

It requires no stretch of the imagination to suppose that some person about the conference room who had

known him was asked at the eleventh hour to prepare a sketch of the deceased, and in the hurry of the occasion, and with only one or two facts in mind, the memorial writer drew forth an old envelope and upon the back of it composed the above gem to go into our historical records. And thus scores of our best men in the ministry have been allowed to drop into obscurity and go to their death with no adequate memorial left on record; and many of the founders of Methodism in Texas sleep in unmarked—and some of them in unknown—graves. Our present-day records, while usually showing more complete memorial notices of deceased preachers, nevertheless contain many examples of “how not to do it.”<sup>8</sup>

Concerning Dr. Baker, fortunately an old friend, Daniel Morse, had gathered from him the facts of his life, and these are contained in a long obituary appearing in the *Texas Christian Advocate* soon after Baker's death. From this we obtain the following items: Baker was born in Maryland in 1794. The family moved to Knox County, Tennessee, in 1798. His parents were Presbyterians. After ten years' residence in Tennessee the family moved to Ohio. While living in Ohio young Baker served as a volunteer under Gen. Harrison in his Indian wars. He united with the Methodist Church in 1812, but was not converted until two years later. He was licensed to exhort in 1815, and the same year was licensed to preach. In 1818 he was admitted into the Ohio Conference. On one of his circuits—Marietta—he was a colleague of Thomas A. Morris, afterwards Bishop. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Roberts, and ordained elder by Bishop McKendree. In 1824, on account of failing health, Baker located, and took up the study of

<sup>8</sup> Example of memoir in one of our present-day Conference Journals: “\_\_\_\_\_ was converted in middle life and entered the ministry, and for more than 25 years he was faithful to every trust. Nothing is known of his early life or parentage,” etc., etc., and then follows a half page of general characteristics and words of praise; but a future historian would scan such an article in vain for facts.



medicine. He graduated at the Medical College of Ohio in 1830. He practiced medicine in Indiana, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. He re-entered the itinerancy in connection with the Missouri Conference, transferring later to the Mississippi Conference, and in 1851 he was formally transferred to the East Texas Conference, although he had lived in this territory for many years previously. We find Baker's name figuring prominently in the "History of Methodism in Mississippi" in the early thirties. A well-known church over in that state, which he assisted in erecting, was called after him, "Baker's Chapel."

Of Francis Wilson, who appears in this region in 1840, but little is known, for though he was a picturesque character in East Texas for several years, he became in later life somewhat embittered toward his Church, and declined to furnish information about his life when requested to do so. He came from Ohio, where he had been preaching for twenty years. Wilson was in charge of the camp-meeting at Jasper in October, 1841, which has been mentioned as being the last one attended by Henry Stephenson. At this meeting, we are told by E. L. Armstrong, in certain reminiscent sketches, a company of rowdies gathered in a grove near by for the purpose of holding a mock service, with the view of breaking up the meeting. Francis Wilson, a towering figure, appeared among them and proposed to lead their service. The gang dispersed without further trouble. Wilson in later life removed into Louisiana, and died there in 1867.

Moses Speer, another name appearing in East Texas in 1839-40, had already reached his three score and ten years when he came to Texas, and he is soon to find his grave here. He began preaching in Kentucky, but about 1804 appears on the Cumberland circuit about Nashville, Tenn. Soon thereafter he located and settled near Nashville, where he reared a useful family. Two sons entered the ministry in Tennessee. In 1838 we find Speer preach-



ing on Red River, in connection with the Arkansas Conference. In 1839 he entered Texas, and was assigned by Fowler to the country in southeast Texas. As a result of his labors a flourishing church was organized at Jasper. At the close of that year he was assigned to the Montgomery circuit. In the summer of 1840 he died in the Robinson settlement, and was buried there.

## CHAPTER X

### ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXAS CONFERENCE

It was a welcome change for the preachers in Texas in the conference season of 1840 to be spared the long and toilsome journey into another state in order to attend conference. The General Conference, which met at Baltimore in May, 1840, set off the Texas Conference, "to include the Republic of Texas except that portion now embraced in the Arkansas Conference." The Bishops designated Bishop Beverly Waugh to visit the Republic and to assemble and organize the first conference.

Bishop Waugh resided in Baltimore, and was at this time in his fifty-first year, and the fourth year in the episcopacy. He was a great traveler and writer, a wise administrator and was described as a sound preacher. The announcement of his coming to Texas stirred not only the little band of preachers, but Methodists far and near as well as others made preparations to attend the conference. Bishop Waugh arrived in Galveston early in December, and accompanied by Thomas O. Summers, he immediately set out for the interior. They visited Rutersville, where the conference was to assemble, and where the embryo college was located, and went on to Bastrop and Austin. The Bishop and Dr. Summers preached in the capital on Sunday, December 20th, looked over the city and visited Congress on Monday, and then set out for Rutersville again, visiting and holding services in Bastrop on their return. They reached Rutersville on Thursday, December 24th, and on Christ-

mas Day, Friday, December 25th, the first session of the Texas Conference was opened.

Fortunately we have Bishop Waugh's own account of this conference, with certain reflections born of the occasion:<sup>1</sup>

This was the first time a Conference of Methodist preachers ever assembled in Texas. Our number was, indeed, small, consisting of nine members. There were six probationers, five only of whom were continued. We organized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, nothing daunted at the fewness of our number, remembering, as we could but do, the first conference of our venerable founder about one hundred years ago, when the immortal Wesley and nine others convened to converse of the deep things of God; and also the first annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which convened on Christmas Day, fifty-six years ago, at which time the Church received her present organization. With these recollections, and especially in reliance on the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ to fulfill his promise to be with his ministers "always, even unto the end of the world," we set up our Ebenezer on the soil of the republic of Texas. Small and feeble as was this beginning, when, after the lapse of half a century, some pious minister or Christian shall trace the operations of Methodism from her commencement, how will his enraptured soul exclaim, "Behold, what hath God wrought!" Our conference continued in session four days, with much love and harmony. During the session there were several sinners converted to God, and many of our members who were in attendance from far and near seemed to say by their excited looks, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." We received on trial four preachers, and readmitted one into the travelling connection. The number of members reported from the several circuits was eighteen hundred and fifty-three, and twenty-five local preachers.

One hundred years and a few months following the organization of the first distinct Methodist society in

<sup>1</sup> From letters published at the time in the N. Y. Christian Advocate and Journal.

London,<sup>2</sup> the Texas Conference was organized—a fact which the little band at Rutgersville could but reflect upon, with rejoicing over the past and abundant hope for the future. And the rapidity with which the work had advanced in Texas it is worth while to recall—a Texas mission circuit first officially appearing in the records in 1837; a Texas district in 1838; two districts in 1839, and an Annual Conference in 1840. Whether a parallel in development—from a circuit to an Annual Conference in four years—can be found in our history is doubtful.

“Our Conference continued in session four days”—almost as long as the largest of our Annual Conferences, with two or three hundred preachers, holds to-day. But, then, neither the bishop nor the preachers, and least of all the people in attendance, were in a hurry to get through and be gone. There wasn’t much business to transact, and the work of appointing the preachers was a small task. But there were four days—Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday—filled up with something. The bishop says that “there were many sinners converted,” and that the people, “from their excited looks, seemed to say ‘It is good to be here.’” It is easily assumed that this meeting looked very much like a great four days’ revival meeting, leisurely carried on, in which preaching, singing and other camp-meeting exercises were prominent, interspersed with intervals of conference business. The records of the first few years of the Texas Conference were lost, and so an exact account of the routine followed cannot be given. From various other sources we learn that the business transacted consisted of the following items, though not necessarily in the order here shown:

<sup>2</sup>“The first society of converts was brought together in 1739 and attached to a Moravian congregation in Fetter Lane, London. Wesley soon found it necessary to dissent from some doctrines taught by the Moravians, and in the following year he transferred his society to an old and disused government building known as the Foundry, and here in July, 1740, ‘The Methodist Society in London’ was formed.”—From art. “Methodists” in the author’s *Handbook of All Denominations*.

1. The election of Thomas O. Summers as secretary.
2. The reports of the preachers, which summed up showed 1878 members within the bounds of the Conference—1623 white, 230 colored and 25 local preachers.
3. The admission of four preachers on trial; namely, Nathan Shook, James H. Collard, D. N. V. Sullivan and Richard Owen.
4. The election and ordination of two to deacon's orders.
5. One preacher discontinued.
6. One elder readmitted.

The result of these ministerial transactions gave, with those already in the active service, eighteen conference members and probationers to receive appointments at this session. There were no transfers to Texas shown at this conference. Abel Stevens was transferred out of the conference, he having returned to the North six months before.

7. The meeting of the "Texas Missionary Society," which, as was shown in a previous chapter, was organized in 1835 at the Kenney camp-ground. This missionary society became the forerunner of the Conference Mission Boards, and this meeting at conference was the first of what later became the "anniversary" meetings of our Conference Mission Boards. This missionary society meeting at the Ruttersville session was one of the great occasions of the conference. To quote again from Bishop Waugh:

It was my intention to present to your readers a sketch of the missionary meeting which was held on the last evening of the Texas Conference. . . . I will only say that most happy should I be to witness in any portion of the United States a missionary meeting as fully imbued with missionary feeling, and as prompt to missionary action as I beheld at Ruttersville, in Texas. The whole scene was a beautiful combination of Christian simplicity and moral grandeur. Never shall I forget the overflow of generous feeling which occurred in connection with



the following incident in the progress of the meeting. A brother who had been quietly and silently, though with deep emotion, observing everything that transpired, modestly arose, and with diffidence, addressed himself to the president of the meeting in the following words: "Silver and gold have I none, yet the Lord has greatly blessed me, and I want to do something for his cause. Such as I have I give unto you. I will give a quarter of a league of land, on the Brazos river, to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Here the suppressed feeling of the audience broke out into an audible applauding, which was as genuine as it was spontaneous. Every man, woman and child seemed to have forgotten everything else for the evening, and concentrated their thoughts, their feelings and their doings on the cause of Christian missions.

8. An address was prepared, by the authority of the conference, and transmitted to the government of the Republic at Austin. The address and the correspondence attending its presentation follows:

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, DAVID G. BURNET, President of the Republic of Texas:<sup>3</sup>

Sir: The Texas annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church during its first and late session, influenced by Christian and patriotic feelings, unanimously adopted the accompanying address to your excellency and the honorable congress, which, in compliance with a resolution of the conference, the undersigned have the honor to present. With distinguished respect, sir, we are, yours,

C. RICHARDSON,  
JOHN HAYNIE.

Austin, Jan. 5th, 1841.

Executive Department, Austin,  
Jan. 7, 1841.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Gentlemen:—It affords me unusual pleasure to transmit to the honorable congress the accompanying "Address from the annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church," which was presented to me on last evening.

<sup>3</sup> President ad interim. President Lamar was out of the country.

This manifestation of patriotic zeal has emanated from the *first session* of the annual conference of that pious and distinguished society, holden in our young republic. To those who believe that "righeousness exalteth a nation," and that "sin is a reproach to any people," the first meeting of such an assembly will be regarded as an auspicious omen, promising a more extended diffusion of the principles of the Bible, which are always coincident with the spread of religious and civil liberty.

DAVID G. BURNET.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, DAVID G. BURNET, President of the Republic of Texas, and to the honorable, the Senate and the House of Representatives of Texas, in Congress assembled:

Gentlemen:—I take pleasure in complying with the request of the Texas annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the occasion of its recent organization, to present to your excellency and to your honorable bodies, the respect and affection which its members cherish toward you, as the constituted guardians of the independence, rights and privileges of this growing republic. The objects of this organization are religion, morality and literature. Believing that the peace, prosperity and perpetuity of this infant republic will be secured in proportion to the prevalence of sound learning, sound morality and sound religion, it will be the aim of the conference to promote these with energy and perseverance. While thus engaged, it confidently relies upon the ability and disposition of the government to extend to it the protection and privileges which are common to all Christian denominations, under the provisions of the constitution. It seeks no peculiar immunities, nor does it desire any special legislation in its behalf. The conference, however, in availing itself of the occasion to present this testimony of its patriotism, cannot refrain from the expression of its deep conviction of the importance of religion and morality, in every department of the government, and among all ranks of its fellow citizens. Without the protection and blessing of Him who setteth up or putteth down nations at His pleasure, what people can prosper or continue? Righteousness only can exalt a nation to true dignity, and secure to it permanence. Sin is a reproach to any people.

The conference cherishes lively hope that the men, who from

time to time shall be elected to make and to execute the laws of the country, will give forth the conservative influence of good examples to the community before whom they occupy a ground so conspicuous. It is and shall continue to be the prayer of this body of Christian ministers, that the blessing of Jehovah may always rest on Texas for her glory and defense, and that her independence, peace and prosperity may continue while the sun and moon shall endure.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the Texas annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its first session, held at Ruttersville, this twenty-ninth day of December, A. D., 1840.

B. WAUGH.

THOS. O. SUMMERS, *Sec.*

9. Another item of business was fixing the place, and the time—as was customary in those days—for the next Annual Conference. San Augustine was chosen, and the date fixed was December 23, 1841.

10. The appointments, made and announced, were as follows:

San Augustine District—

Littleton Fowler, P. E.  
 San Augustine, Francis Wilson.  
 Nacogdoches, to be supplied.  
 Harrison, Nathan Shook.  
 Jasper, Henderson D. Palmer.

Galveston District—

Samuel A. Williams, P. E.  
 Galveston and Houston, Thos. O. Summers.  
 Brazoria, Abner P. Manly.  
 Montgomery, Richard Owen, Jas. H. Collard.  
 Liberty, to be supplied.  
 Crockett, Daniel Carl.  
 Nashville, Robert Crawford.

Ruttersville District—

Robert Alexander, P. E.  
 Austin, John Haynie.  
 Washington, Jesse Hord.

Centre Hill, Robert H. Hill.

Matagorda, Daniel V. N. Sullivan.

Victoria, Joseph P. Sneed.

Chauncey Richardson, President Rutgersville College.

Abel Stevens, transferred to Providence Conference.

And so, with the reading of the appointments, the first conference in Texas is brought to a close, and after lingering farewells the people disperse, and the preachers mount their horses and ride off in various directions. Bishop Waugh remained in Texas two weeks longer, and that his heart was with the young conference which he had launched, and with the small band of preachers whom he had sent out, was abundantly manifested. For the first time since regular missionaries were sent into Texas, the Missionary Society of the Church was unable to contribute anything toward the support of the preachers here. "It was to me a source of great gratification," said Bishop Waugh, "to see the noble spirit of our brethren of the ministry and membership not to burden the embarrassed Missionary Society with the support of Texas missionaries. It was difficult to determine which ought most to be admired, the manly and Christian proposals on the part of the membership to assume the support of the preachers, or the noble confiding of the preachers in the good will of a people having more of the spirit of Christian honesty and kindness than available means for their practical manifestation. I could not draw upon an indebted treasury lest it might become bankrupt, but there was no dismissal nor withdrawal from the field on that account, for the people said: Give us the ministers of Christ, and we will divide with them the means of our subsistence; and the preachers said, Here are we, under such circumstances, send us. These were sent, and my prayers follow them, that they have the best year they have ever lived and labored."

We shall have occasion a little later to inquire into the support of the preachers during this period, and we

shall find it meager enough. It is worth while to note now that there was not a parsonage anywhere in Texas, nor the semblance of a woman's missionary society, to look after the comfort of the preacher and his family. The financial condition of the country and of the people was at the lowest ebb. And yet in the face of all, the charter members of the Texas Conference rode forth to disperse themselves over Texas, from Harrison County to Victoria, and from the Gulf to the Falls of the Brazos.

On Monday morning, December 21, 1840, a few days before the opening of the Texas Conference, Bishop Waugh and Thomas O. Summers, while in Austin, walked up and surveyed the elevation upon which they were told the future capitol was to be erected. The capitol at that time was a small frame building, of inferior construction, picketed in with palisades as a protection against the Indians. The Bishop described the city as containing between eight hundred and twelve hundred inhabitants, occupying houses but little in advance of shanties and cabins. If, after more than eighty years, Bishop Waugh could visit the capital again and walk about that noble eminence upon which stands our present imposing state capitol, he would have reason enough to exclaim, "What hath God wrought." He could view, situated upon the capitol grounds and in the building, the monuments of the heroes of Texas—the Alamo defenders, the Texas Rangers, the Confederate soldier, and the volunteer firemen. But he would also probably vision another hero, whose monument has not been erected there or elsewhere, but one whose labors have contributed perhaps more to the growth and stability of our civilization than any other; and if he had his due his monument would stand there among the others in the form of a pioneer preacher on horseback.



## CHAPTER XI

### TEXAS IN 1840

WE have had glimpses here and there in the correspondence and journals of the preachers of conditions existing in Texas under which Methodism was planted—of difficulties natural and moral, of Indian depredations and Mexican invasions; of floods of waters and scourges of fevers; of lawmakers and of lawlessness. And much of the contemporary records simply descriptive of the country or reflecting the conditions of the times we have not used; but it is proper that as we go along we should take some account of contemporary Texas history and of the conditions under which Methodist preachers labored. A movement like the one whose course we are following is not something apart from the general current of human affairs; but Methodism perhaps more than any other Church has always related itself to the life of the people, and its history and the history of the community where it works are always closely interwoven. And while Methodism is leavening the history of the people, it on the other hand is being influenced and colored by the course of human events. *Texas* Methodism has a character all its own, just as Texas—the state and the people—has had its peculiar history and has its own character.

The impression that early got abroad in the United States concerning Texas—and which persisted more or less among the uninformed for a generation or more—was that the population was largely made up of a wild, free and an uncouth people, among whom religion, education and “good society” could not be found. The bowie

knife and the six-shooter were looked upon as peculiar Texas institutions, and the only instruments that made for law and order. Reports of Indian horrors and threatened Mexican invasions, with more prospective Goliads and Alamos, were widely circulated and exaggerated, and the somewhat general belief which prevailed for years was, that Mexico would finally come back and conquer Texas. These reports, combined with other unfavorable impressions, served to retard the full tide of immigration into the Republic for years—until annexation to the United States in fact had removed this danger. It is likewise true, judging from the tenor of some of the appeals from Texas to the Mission Board, that the Church authorities in New York were at first not very enthusiastic about throwing forces and money into Texas. It is surprising at this day also to discover, as one may, that here and there in the United States, through the press or in the halls of Congress, voices were raised against the Texas revolution and its successful issue, charging that it was an insurrection of rebels and irresponsible bandits and adventurers, and protesting against the recognition of the independence of Texas.

That Texas and Texans were much slandered abroad in the early days is now evident to everyone; but that there was a modicum of truth in much that was published and circulated of an unfavorable nature cannot be denied. Still, in admitting this, it is only meant to say that Texas was no better nor worse in the character of its first settlers and the condition of its society than other new settled states of the West and Southwest. Texas was simply more in the public eye because of its recent tragic history and because of its claims for recognition as an independent nation, and the resulting question of annexation to the United States.

As to the trouble between Texas and Mexico, and the threatenings from that quarter, these continued almost up to the time of annexation in 1846. Mexico had re-

pudiated the treaties entered into by Santa Anna with the Texan authorities after his disastrous defeat at San Jacinto, in which Texas was to be dissolved from all connection with Mexico, on the ground that the pledge was made under duress, while the Mexican president was a prisoner in the hands of the Texans. Of course Texas had fairly won her independence, and she was able to maintain it, and she meant to do so; but the menace from below the Rio Grande hung there like a cloud for years. It would have been much less and would have ended sooner had it not been for provocations and irritations originating on the Texas side. For example, several hundred Texans, most of them from that adventurous "paroled soldier" class, joined with a few Mexican rebels in northern Mexico in 1839-40 to set up the "Republic of the Rio Grande," and thus take from Mexico several of her states bordering on Texas. This ambitious scheme failed, and had no other result than further embittering Mexican feelings against Texas. Another ill-advised and ill-fated move, and this time by the express authority of the Texan government—or, rather, of President Lamar, as the Congress of the Republic refused to appropriate funds for the enterprise—was the Santa Fé Expedition, a caravan formed of more than three hundred soldiers and merchants, which set off in June, 1841, "to invite the people of Santa Fé to renounce the authority of Mexico and join Texas." The claim of Texas to that portion of country rested only upon the action of its Congress in declaring that "the Rio Grande from its mouth to its source shall form the western boundary of the Republic." The expedition to Santa Fé, traveling through a new and an unknown country, lost its way in northwest Texas; the members of the party had numerous clashes with the Indians; the food supply became exhausted, and water could not be found, and in their extremity the forlorn party became reduced to eating prairie dogs and snakes. At length the expedition reached its destination, in the

month of October, depleted in numbers, and in different straggling companies, only to be taken in hand as a hostile force by the Mexican authorities, and sent to the city of Mexico as prisoners. The survivors were finally released only through the good offices of the United States. The result of this adventure was, of course, further irritation of Mexico, and a depreciation of Texas in the eyes of her enemy, as well as among her friends in the United States.<sup>1</sup> The temper of the Texans at home, when reports reached them of the fate of the Santa Fé party, was retaliatory in the extreme. The Texan Congress passed an act "extending the boundaries of the Republic so as to include portions of the states of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Durango and Sinaloa, and the whole of Chihuahua, Sonora, New Mexico and the two Californias—embracing a country of greater extent than the American Union at that time, and including two-thirds of the territory of Mexico, with two millions of her inhabitants."<sup>2</sup> This ridiculous and hot-headed measure President Sam Houston, who had come to the head of affairs for the second time, vetoed.

Under such conditions it is not surprising that Texas could not settle down to fixed and peaceful habits of internal development, nor afford that security to life and property which would have made it a more inviting field to immigration. Fortunately for Texas there was on this side of the Rio Grande the stabilizing and peaceful influence of Sam Houston, twice president during the days of the Republic, and below the Rio Grande Mexico was for many years so exhausted and torn by civil war as to be unable to unite in an effort to reassert its claims over Texas, and could make but a feeble effort to strike

<sup>1</sup> "The wild-geese campaign to Santa Fé was an ill-judged affair; and their surrender without the fire of a gun has lessened the prowess of the Texans in the minds of the Mexicans, and it will take another San Jacinto affair to restore their character."—Gen. A. Jackson to Gen. Houston, May 25, 1842, quoted in Yoakum, II, 329.

<sup>2</sup> Yoakum, II, 343.



back even when she deemed her own territory invaded. A Mexican army twice crossed into Texas following the Santa Fé expedition, but each time without serious results except in the last instance to draw an invading army from Texas into Mexico. This force dwindled to another adventurous band which ended in disaster. So the "war" with Mexico dragged on until the annexation of Texas transferred the quarrel to the United States.

The relations of Texas with her Indian neighbors were quite as unsettled as were those with Mexico. Of course the original ground of hostility of the savages was that which prevailed throughout all our history—that of the gradual invasion and settlement of their country by the white man. But in Texas as elsewhere that hostility was often provoked into unnecessary activity by unwise governmental policy or by unfriendly dealings of individuals or communities. The Indian population of Texas was estimated in 1836 at 14,200<sup>3</sup>—of which 8,000 were embraced in the civilized tribes, such as the Cherokees and Choctaws, and the remainder divided among several hostile tribes, of which the Comanches were the largest—about 2,000 in number. The Cherokees, the largest tribe in Texas, occupied a large territory in eastern Texas now included in Cherokee and Smith counties, having settled in that country in 1823, and by treaty with Mexico given possession of the land. Their peaceful occupation was not questioned by Texas until 1839. The gradual encroachment of the whites brought on occasional clashes between the two races, and charges and counter-charges of theft and depredations were made. In 1838 the Cherokees were charged with the murder of two white families and the breaking up of a white settlement which had been located in what is now the northwest portion of Cherokee County. The Cherokees alleged that the killings had been done by prairie Indians from the west. The events alarmed that section of country and aroused

<sup>3</sup> Yoakum, II, 197.



the civil and military authorities to take drastic steps against the Cherokees. The government had satisfied itself also that the Cherokees had allied themselves with Mexico in meditating a general onslaught on Texas. In a bloody conflict between Texan forces and the Indians in July, 1839, the Cherokee tribes were broken up and expelled from the country.

To the west and northwest the tribes that are best known in Texas history were: (1) the Wacoos, living in villages on the Brazos and pursuing the peaceful art of agriculture, though they were not free from the blood of the white man; (2) the Caddoes, a powerful and warlike tribe early driven from East Texas and settling near the present location of Fort Worth; (3) the Pawnees and the Anadaquas on the upper Brazos, the latter located near the present town of Graham, and guilty of at least one bloody incursion into the white settlements; (4) the Apaches, located near Bandera Pass, allies of the Comanches. For a century it is said this tribe depredated upon the citizens of San Antonio; (5) the Townkawas, a small tribe on the Colorado, which through mortal dread of the Comanches always lived near the American settlements. They were sometimes guilty of committing petty thefts but were never openly hostile; (6) the Kiowas, having their homes in the Indian Territory and Arizona, but occasionally followed the buffaloes to the Brazos and committed depredations on the Texas settlements. And last of all (7) the Comanches, the largest and fiercest band of hostile Indians in Texas. As already noted the estimated number of Comanches in Texas in 1836 was 2,000; but the Texas Comanches were only the southern extension of a family which ranged over the west and southwest, whose numbers were variously estimated at from 12,000 to 30,000. The principal villages of the Texas Comanches were on the upper Colorado. The old San Saba mission, founded by the early Catholic missionaries, was established for the benefit of the Comanches.

Their estimated number as late as 1854 was 1,100. But whatever the number of the Comanches, it is certain that the trouble they caused along the Texas frontier was out of all proportion to their numbers. And whether always guilty or not, their reputation gained them the credit for nearly all the murders and burnings and captures perpetrated along our border for a generation.

The most noted Indian tragedies in our history, beginning in 1836 and running through the period we have been considering, were the following:<sup>4</sup>

The Parker's Fort massacre, of May 19, 1836. The Parkers and others, originally from Tennessee, but lately from Illinois, settled near the present town of Groesbeck, in Limestone County, in 1833. They were "Hardshell" Baptists, the elder Parker being a preacher of that faith. Daniel Parker, a relative, was the originator of the "Two-Seed" doctrine, and he preached in the early days in East Texas. As a protection against the Indians the families of this community had "forted up." On the above date the fort was visited by several hundred Comanches and Caddoes—some say Kiowas—who, by a show of friendship, induced Benjamin Parker to come outside, when he was instantly killed. The savages then made a murderous attack upon the company, killing four men and making prisoners of some of the women and children. A few escaped, making their way to the nearest settlement on the Brazos. Cynthia Ann Parker, then a girl eight years of age, was carried away a prisoner, and was never heard of until 1860, when she was taken and restored to the remnant of her people by a company under Captain Sul Ross. This fight occurred near "Medicine Mounds," on Pease River, in Hardeman County. The captive girl had married a chief of the Comanches, and one of her sons, Quanah Parker, remained with the Indians and became a noted chief.

<sup>4</sup> A complete list of Indian raids and killings may be found in Thrall's *History of Texas*, pp. 451-466.

One of the most heroic and memorable single-handed fights of a family in defense of their home against the Indians occurred in 1836 also, and was that of the Taylors, located on the Leon River, just below the present town of Belton. This point was remote from the settlements, and Taylor's was the "outside house" in that day. Notwithstanding his exposed position, Taylor's home was not molested for nearly a year after he had ventured to settle there. In November, 1836, however, the Caddoes paid him a hostile visit. The account which follows is that of Mrs. Taylor, related to a Methodist preacher who later visited her home:<sup>5</sup>

A beautiful autumn day had ended, and the full moon which had just risen flooded the valley with its light as Captain Taylor observed a party of Indians approaching the house from the direction of the settlements below. As a small company had stopped at his cabin a few days before, on their way down the country, he supposed it was the same party returning, and felt no alarm at their presence. Instead of halting, they marched in silence in single file and passed beyond the house. Seeing that something was wrong the Captain felt some alarm, yet he knew not what to do. Before he could decide, the Indians stopped and the leader shouted out to the Captain in a loud, defiant tone:

"Me Caddo; Caddo and white man good coboshealas, but you kill Caddo on Little River."

This statement referred to a difficulty between Col. Coleman and a party of friendly Indians, found in possession of citizen's horses which by some means had become lost. The Indians claimed that they had been employed by the proper owners to find and bring them in, and were so doing. Coleman and his men chose to believe they had stolen them, and put them to death.

This peremptory challenge to battle on such short notice took the Captain completely by surprise. There were thirteen Indians, and the disparity of numbers gave them greatly the advantage. The Taylor family consisted of Taylor and wife and

<sup>5</sup> O. M. Addison.

two sons, about grown, one of whom, however, was not at home, and two girls.

Without further parley the savages opened fire; but the door was promptly shut and preparations made for defense. There were two rifles on hand, but a scarcity of bullets. While a part of the family moulded a fresh supply the Captain used the rifle to the best effect, shooting through the openings between the logs. Depending upon their superior numbers the Indians became very defiant. What little English they knew had evidently been learned from bad white men. Consequently their vocabulary was limited mainly to curses and imprecations, which they dealt out with furious energy. For awhile there was no response to this from the Taylors, but at length the wife concluding that an answer in kind might show that the besieged were not dispirited, said to the Captain:

“Old man, curse them, curse them, old man.”

The Captain, having his own reasons for silence, neither replied to his wife nor to the Indians; seeing which Mrs. Taylor undertook to reply to the savages herself, and with the most horrid oaths and imprecations she could command, hurled defiance at the Indians.

The Indians displayed great personal courage in exposing themselves to the deadly fire of Taylor. At an early stage of the conflict one of them came to the door, which was too short to fit the opening, and placing his hands on top of it tried to break it down. Mrs. Taylor's vigilant eyes discovered him, and seizing an axe applied it to his hands and forced him to make a hasty retreat. One of the assailants being shot down near the house, a comrade ran up to bear off the body, but a well-directed bullet from Taylor's rifle laid him beside the other.

Although defiant toward the Indians, and constantly cheering her husband and the children, Mrs. Taylor made preparations for the worst. In the thickest of the fight she instructed her daughters to tie up in convenient bundles some of their clothes, that in case of their defeat and capture they would leave behind them a trail of torn bits of cloth to guide any searching party that might come after them.

The house was a double cabin of logs, with a hall between. During the fight the family were all in one room. The Indians thus had the unoccupied room between them and the Captain's

rifle, and they could easily approach this end of the house protected and undiscovered. Taking advantage of this protection, they approached and fired the vacant end of the house. This made the situation of the family desperate in the extreme. After the fashion of that day the roof was laid on of loose boards, held in place by long poles. Mrs. Taylor with a board in her hand climbed up and succeeded in pushing off the poles and boards where the roof of the adjoining part of the house would communicate the fire to the occupied room, and by heroic work here, assisted by a liberal supply of vinegar to extinguish the flames as they took hold—as there was not sufficient water in the house, but fortunately a barrel of vinegar on hand—the occupied room was saved, though the other end of the house was completely burned down.

The savages had certainly expected the family to be destroyed and leaving them to their fate they had made off unobserved during the fire, leaving the two dead members of the party lying where they had fallen. After waiting and watching in suspense for sometime after the fire for a possible renewal of the attack, and this not occurring, the family removed their bedding and other household effects into the river bottom for the remainder of the night, one of the boys standing guard on top of the unburned part of the house while this was going on. The next day the Taylors made their way to the fort at the Three Forks of Little River, about three miles below. The next day a party of rangers went up to the Taylor house and found everything as it had been left the night before, and the Indians lying dead in the yard. The rangers cut off their heads and stuck them on long poles and raised them as a monument to the heroic defence of the Taylor home, and as a warning to other Indians that might pass that way.

Taylor County is named for the family that so heroically defended their frontier home in 1836, and the valley where they first settled also bears their name.

An Indian tragedy of the Republic days, a survivor of which remains to this day to tell the story, was that of the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Gilleland in Refugio County in 1842 and the attempted stealing of the chil-



dren. The children were rescued, and one of them is Mrs. Rebecca J. Gilleland Fisher, widow of the Rev. Orceneth Fisher, who, at the age of ninety-one (Aug. 31, 1922) lives in Austin, and who has for many years filled the honored place of president of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Mrs. Fisher, in relating the horrible experience of her childhood, says: <sup>6</sup>

The day my parents were murdered was one of those days which youth and old age so much enjoy. It was in strange contrast to the tragedy at its close. We were only a few rods from the house. Suddenly the war whoop of the Comanches burst upon our ears, sending terror to all hearts. My father, in trying to reach the house for weapons, was shot down, and near him my mother, clinging to her children and praying God to spare them, was also murdered. As she pressed us to her heart we were baptized in her precious blood. We, a brother and myself, were torn from her dying embrace and hurried off into captivity, the chief's wife dragging me to her horse and clinging to me with a tenacious grip. She was at first savage and vicious looking, but from some cause her wicked nature soon relaxed, and folding me in her arms, she gently smoothed back my hair, indicating that she was very proud of her suffering victim. A white man with all the cruel instinct of the savage was with them. Several times they threatened to cut off our hands and feet if we did not stop crying. Then the women, in savage tones and gestures, would scold, and they would cease their cruel threats. We were captured just as the sun was setting and were rescued the next morning.

During the few hours we were their prisoners, the Indians never stopped. Slowly and stealthily they pushed their way through the settlement to avoid detection, and just as they halted for the first time the soldiers suddenly came upon them, and firing commenced. As the battle raged the Indians were forced to take flight. Thereupon they pierced my little brother through the body, and striking me with some sharp instrument on the side of the head, they left us for dead, but we soon recovered sufficiently to find ourselves alone in that dark, dense forest, wounded and covered with blood.

<sup>6</sup> Quarterly Texas State Historical Assn., III, 210-213.

Having been taught to ask God for all things, we prayed to our Heavenly Father to take care of us and direct us out of that lonely place. I lifted my wounded brother, so faint and weak, and we soon came to the edge of a large prairie, when as far as our swimming eyes could see we discovered a company of horsemen. Supposing them to be Indians, frightened beyond expression, and trembling under my heavy burden, I rushed back with him into the woods and hid behind some thick brush. But those brave men, on the alert, dashing from place to place, at last discovered us. Soon we heard the clatter of horse's hoofs and the voices of our rescuers calling us by name, assuring us they were our friends who had come to take care of us. Lifting the almost unconscious little sufferer, I carried him out to them as best I could. With all the tenderness of women, their eyes suffused with tears, those good men raised us to their saddles and hurried off to camp, where we received every attention and kindness that man could bestow.

The little boy recovered and lived to be an old man. Albert Sidney Johnston was a member of the rescue party which saved these children.

The year 1837 witnessed the killing of two rangers under Capt. Geo. B. Erath in a fight with the Indians in Robertson's colony. A number of colonists were killed near Nashville, and James Coryell was killed near the falls of the Brazos. On the headwaters of the Trinity a scouting party of soldiers lost nine of their number in a fight with the Indians. In 1838 occurred the "Battle Creek Fight," in the Navarro County. A party of land seekers from Robertson County were attacked while surveying, and the party broken up, losing seventeen of their number. In the winter of 1838-39 the Indians attacked the settlements about the falls of the Brazos, killing several whites, which brought on a general conflict between the whites and Indians in that locality.

The years 1839-40 were red with the toll taken by the Indian from the white man, although the penalties exacted from the warriors were heavy also. In 1839,

besides numerous clashes between the whites and the Indians in the west, occurred the "Cherokee War" in East Texas, already noticed. In March, 1840, occurred the "Council House Fight" in San Antonio, in which seven Texans were killed and many wounded. In August there followed a general invasion from Comancheland. More than four hundred warriors descended upon the western country, depredated upon Victoria and other settlements, and burned the town of Linnville on the coast. The Indians were intercepted on their retreat and attacked by Texas forces, the fight being known as the "Plum Creek Fight." But the invaders made good their escape without much loss. During this raid twenty-one white people were killed.

We have yet to recount more than one Indian tragedy occurring on the border of the North Texas country, in one of which John B. Denton lost his life; but these will be noted when we return to that country in other chapters. But suffice it to say that the chief engagements noted above do not fill up the whole story. For a full decade, from 1836 to 1846, settlers, traders, surveyors and preachers, traveling beyond the borders of the oldest settlements, were in danger of attack by roving Indians, and for a full generation the Indian was an occasional menace all along the western and northwestern frontier of Texas.

Besides her troubles from without, the statesmen of the young Republic had their hands full of internal problems in those days. The chief problem, and one that was ever pressing and always growing, was that of raising money enough to keep things going. Texas found herself at the beginning of her separate national existence with an empty treasury and a million and a quarter dollars in debt. With a scattered population of less than 50,000 raw settlers, with scarcely no internal improvements, and with her natural wealth undeveloped, it would seem that a modest and economical beginning in governmental mat-

ters would have commended itself to Texas's first statesmen. But the machinery of state was set in motion on an ambitious scale. The president of the Republic was to receive \$10,000 a year, and other officers in proportion—and there was no lack of officers and commissioners and foreign agents. At first there was a considerable standing army, until inability to pay and equip the troops made it necessary to release the larger part of them on parole. Continuous efforts were also made to fit out a "navy" as a defensive measure against Mexico. All of this national machinery required money, and yet more money, and yet funds in anything like adequate amounts could never be raised, though every method known to state financiering was used. Taxes and duties on imports brought in mere dribblets. The raw public lands were drawn upon by the issuance of land scrip to be sold abroad at fifty cents an acre, but most of this went begging. It had no attraction to actual or prospective settlers, as they could obtain more land than they could use by simply settling upon it. Loans were sought here and there abroad, and on the prospect of these loans further princely expenditures were made. Finally paper money was issued as a medium of exchange, and this gradually depreciated in value until it reached the low mark of fourteen cents on the dollar. By 1840 the fiscal affairs of the country were gloomy enough. Gold and silver had about disappeared from sight, and the income of the government consisted mainly of its own promissory notes which it had made acceptable for taxes and customs. In his message to Congress at the beginning of his second administration in 1841, Gen. Houston said: "There is not a dollar in the treasury; the nation is involved from ten to fifteen millions; we are not only without money, but without credit, and for want of punctuality, without character. Patriotism, industry and enterprise are now our only resources—apart from our public domain and the precarious revenues of the country."

With such a meager and uncertain income, with an expensive government to support, and with extravagant defensive measures against Mexico and the Indians, while at the same time often provoking attacks from these external enemies, it is plain that the Texas government had not the means, if it had possessed the inclination, to turn to internal improvements and development. The then settled portions of the Republic were in that part of the country supplied with the most numerous and the largest streams. The journals and letters of the traveling preachers of that day would indicate that these streams were nearly always on a "rise," and frequently overflowing the country; yet nothing was being done to bridge them or to confine them within bounds. In the winter usually and at the flood times the river bottoms and all the lower country were little less than seas of water and mud, so that trade and travel were not only difficult, but dangerous. Bishop Andrew, who visited Texas in 1842, and made the journey from Houston to the interior, after some observations on the commercial advantages of Houston, adds in his Journal: "Had there been a tolerable and certain communication established with Houston by means of a passable turnpike or canal, it would long have continued to command the trade of this fertile region; but on my way from Houston I passed a whole company of wagons encamped at Little Cypress, about thirty miles from Houston, many of which had been lying there two weeks, when one week's work with twenty hands would have thrown a good bridge across the stream; and at Johnson's Bayou, only nine miles from town, wagons are frequently detained a day or two, when ten hands could put up a good bridge in three days. These are only given as specimens, and whether it results from want of spirit or want of money, the effect is the same."

But in spite of all the drawbacks which have been noticed, there continued to flow into Texas a consid-



erable stream of immigrants, induced to move hither by the widely advertised offers of free lands to the settler. Texas from the earliest days was a good advertiser. The charm of her history and the lure of her vast and productive lands were more than an offset to the libelous stories and the specters of Indian and Mexican horrors which floated about in the States, and many a caravan of "movers" continued to cross the border while Texas was still a "foreign nation." The white population of Texas in 1836 was between 25,000 and 30,000.<sup>7</sup> Within ten years, or at the time of annexation, the population had increased to 100,000, and there were in addition some thirty-five thousand slaves. From these figures an estimate may be made of the average annual inflow, so that by the close of 1840 the white population of Texas may be set down at somewhere around fifty thousand. It is evident also from the large number of slaves present, that this population came mainly from the Southern States. But there were quite a few colonies of settlers from Germany made about this time and later, located for the most part in south and southwest Texas. Roughly speaking the settled portions of Texas in 1840 were within the area bounded by the Nueces River and a line drawn from San Antonio through Austin to Marshall, and again from Marshall to Red River, about Bonham. Much of this territory was only very sparsely settled.

Thus, briefly and imperfectly sketched, was the vast field into which rode those eighteen preachers from the Texas Conference at Ruttersville late in 1840.

<sup>7</sup> Population figures from "School History of Texas," Barker, Potts and Ramsdell, pp. 157, 166. No census was taken in Texas until 1846.

## CHAPTER XII

### CONTEMPORARY METHODISM IN NORTHEAST TEXAS

WE left the Red River country a few chapters back with only the merest beginnings made, with a scant and unsettled population, and with nothing substantial or permanent in the way of church organization. We have now reached a period when real foundations are being laid, both in the settlement of the country and in church building, and in the present chapter we will take account of conditions existing and the progress of our own work there from 1835 to the early forties.

A record which completely reflects early times in this section is a reminiscential sketch of Andrew Davis,<sup>1</sup> for more than fifty years a traveling Methodist preacher in Texas, and who gloried in the fact that he was born within her borders. Davis was born at Jonesboro, on the Texas side of Red River, in 1827, his father having settled at that place in 1818. It was then Coahuila and Texas; the Mexican, Victor Blanco, was governor, and the seat of government was in far-off Saltillo. Of course in this remote corner of the Mexican dominions, where the Mexican claim was disputed, American population and American influence predominated, and, as we have shown, this portion of Texas, both as to its ecclesiastical and political connections, was for many years under the jurisdiction of Arkansas.

Andrew's father, Daniel Davis, though a man of recognized ability and leadership wherever he lived, was

<sup>1</sup> Manuscript prepared by A. Davis, and loaned to the author by his daughter, Mrs. A. Laswell, Waxahachie, Texas.

a rough, free, honest frontiersman, a stranger to all the refinements of life, and indifferent to things religious. His first wife was a Tidwell, from the family which tradition says came the first class-leader of the Methodist society organized at Jonesboro in 1817. His second wife, of whom Andrew was born, was a devout Methodist, and a housewife of some note. An event in the family history was the sojourn of Sam Houston in the Davis home near Jonesboro, "to rest and feed up his horse," when Houston first entered Texas in December, 1832. It was but a month following Houston's visit, or in January, 1833, that Andrew's mother died. After this the elder Davis, with his only son and a negro servant, in whose charge Andrew had been placed, removed to Shelby County, in eastern Texas. Daniel Davis returned to the Red River country in 1836 and recruited a company for Gen. Houston's army, and this force had arrived within thirty miles of the General's camp when news reached them of the battle of San Jacinto. While living in East Texas Daniel Davis married his third wife, a widow named Mrs. Bascus,<sup>2</sup> the union being solemnized by Emory Rains, the Alcalde. Here also Davis became acquainted with the Parmers, the Teels, the English and other families noted in Texas and Methodist history, whose life-long friendship his preacher son enjoyed.

In 1836 Davis returned and located again in the land of his first love, northeastern Texas. Here we will let Andrew Davis take up the narrative and give his own recollections of the times:

When my father moved back to Red River he settled out on the prairies eight or ten miles from Clarksville to Paris. This settlement was made the latter part of the spring of 1836. . . . From 1834 on that section of country now known as Red River county filled up very fast. Pecan Point where I was born was the first place of any notoriety. Then sprung up out from the river

<sup>2</sup> The third Mrs. Davis also came to be a noted Methodist. After Davis's death she married J. D. Boone. She died at Sweetwater in 1889.

on the prairie a little place LaGrange. There was a little store and blacksmith shop there. A small school also taught at LaGrange before Clarksville existed. In 1835 Clarksville was located and named for James Clark, one of the old settlers of that portion of the country. In 1836 Richard Ellis and A. H. Latimer represented Red River in the convention that declared the independence of Texas. At the same time Judge Ellis, son of Richard Ellis, represented the same territory as Miller county in the legislature of Arkansas. My father had located his land certificate in what was finally the territory of Fannin county, on North Sulphur, eight miles south of Honey Grove. In 1837 he moved on his own land. I do not remember dates, but our house was the outside one. We had not been there long until the Indian depredations in stealing and murdering became so alarming that father did not feel safe in keeping my step-mother and myself at the house at night. Late of evenings he would take some little bed clothes and carry my step-mother and myself and her own little baby girl about one year old a half a mile from the house into a dense thicket and put us down there until next morning. Father would return and with the colored people guard the house through the night. It was believed that the Indians never killed negroes; that the worst to them was to take them prisoners. It was not often that they did that. When I look back to my first experiences and earliest memories they are a great mystery to myself. To think of little children spending long dark nights without saying a word above a whisper. Taken away from home and from all the other members of the family, out to where nature has never received a mark from human hand, or the slightest impress of civilization is to be seen anywhere, the children seemed to be filled with awe and alarm. Like little scared partridges they hover down as if trying to fill the least possible space. In the morning, after the sun is up and well out on his daily course, these little children assume their wonted life and cheerfulness. For a year or so I, with a little half-sister, were accustomed to this kind of life. I and that child joined universal nature in unbroken silence for the night.

At the now frontier home we were in camps for a month or two. Log houses were to be built, and until that was done we were in camps. Except whatever of childish fear of Indians, I felt I was able to enjoy myself more here in this frontier life

than any place we had ever lived. I was now about nine years old, and had been trained to the use of a gun from the time I was five years old. I had been killing turkeys, squirrels and other things for sometime previous. An Indian had trained me to hunt for deer and other game. I had been bred and born in the woods. Game of some kind was in sight of the house almost every hour of the day. The bottoms of North Sulphur and its tributaries abounded in bear, panther and all the small varments.

Here the writer relates how he, as a nine year old woodsman, accidentally discovered a bear asleep in a cave, and after scampering away in his first fright, recovered himself and returned and killed the bear, which gave him considerable notoriety. But we hasten on to the tragic ending of this frontier life.

My boyhood life would have been completely happy on the frontier but for the fact that the Indians were a just occasion of alarm. They were in the country during the light of every moon. The fattest and best cattle were being killed on the prairie and a small portion of the meat taken and the balance left. There never was a month that passed that horses were not stolen, and in addition to all this many valuable lives were being taken all along the frontier line for fifty or sixty miles. It was found to be necessary to go into a fort for safety. Immediately the place for the fort was selected and the fort built. It was some ten miles down the Sulphur Fork from our home, and that distance back in the settlement, father's being the outside house. Mr. Isaac Lidy was elected captain, and the fort took his name. There was, I suppose, twenty-five or thirty families that took protection in the fort. There was about the time a somewhat similar fort built on Bois D'Arc creek, where Bonham is located. This was first known as Gilbert's Camp, and afterwards as Fort English, after a prominent citizen, Bailey English. The families on the north and west, or the Red River section, went into it, while those on the south and east went to Fort Lidy. There was eighty-five men under Captain Lidy. He kept scouts out all the time, but the Indians would get through their lines by some means. Occasionally horses stolen and a man caught out



and killed. There was therefore not much hunting done while we were in the fort. The scouts were constantly killing game and bringing the meat in to the fort. Wild game was plentiful, often buffalo would come and mingle among the cattle of the fort. Our cows would get greatly excited at the presence of the buffalo. They would collect in great numbers and bellow furiously, showing the wildest excitement. When you observe the cows so excited you knew the buffalo were among them. The captain always sent out a few men to kill them, and it was remarkable when they were so mixed with our gentle stock the men could ride close to them without being noticed and shoot them down. My father took cows to the fort for the milk and butter and a few hogs for fresh meat. . . . It may seem strange to you who read this after the long intervening years to hear me say that all the men in the fort made good crops that year. They formed a company and all moved out of the fort together under a guard of twenty-five men from the fort. Each man took all his teams and force, be it large or small; they struck camps on a farm and worked it over, and then moved to another, and on in this way until all the farms were well and thoroughly cleaned. This was repeated the crop season through. But we are just now on the eve of a great change. There had been no Indian depredations of any kind for quite a while. All are anxious to get out of the fort. The fort would still be kept up and scouts would be out scouring the country all the time. All therefore decided to move out to their farms and ranches. My father moved home, his house eight or ten miles from the fort and the outside house. He had only been at home eleven days. On the morning of the twelfth day he was killed. . . .

In another part of his narrative Andrew Davis relates the circumstances of his father's death, and of the breaking up of their frontier home, as follows:

I have said that he was industrious. He always went to bed early and arose early; always got up at four o'clock in the morning. The morning that he was killed he arose at his usual hour. He walked to the back door and called the cook woman, who occupied a cabin in the back yard. He called up the colored man also, who did the feeding of the stock. My father

would never wear boots. He had a way in the morning of slipping his feet in his shoes, in a slip-shod manner, and walking in that way until he had made the calls as above, and then slip off his shoes and lie down again until just time to prepare for breakfast. He did this the morning he was killed. After father had been lying down a short time, Susie, the cook woman, came to the back door and called my step-mother and said, "Miss Margaret, there are Indians about the place." This kind of announcement would naturally panic a lady. She whirled to my father and said, "Mr. Davis, Susie says there are Indians about the house." Father arose with his usual self-possession, walked to the door and said, "Susie, what makes you think there are Indians about?" "Why," she called, "because I hear them hollowing at the lot like owls." "Well," said father, "that is just what it is—it is nothing but owls you hear," and added, "Susie you know you are a great coward. Now go back to the kitchen and see that you have your breakfast in time."

Just about daybreak father got up, walked to the front gate, where he met Mr. Glothlin, a young man father had hired. They stepped out in front of the gate and were standing talking. At that moment the Indians fired on them from the horse lot, some sixty yards away. The young man was not hurt; his clothes were torn some, and a lock of hair cut from his head. My father had one arm broken and received a deadly shot in the breast, ranging through the region of the heart and lungs. He died immediately.

The evening before my father was killed there had fallen a heavy rain. This rain drove twelve or fourteen scouts to our house, who had been out from Fort Lidy, looking for Indian signs. If they had not been at our house the Indians would have murdered the whole family. After they fired upon father and the young man they raised a terrifying Indian war-whoop, and came running like hyenas. Just at the time the Indians arrived at the yard fence, and some of them on the fence, these rangers threw the door open, which showed such a number of men that it made them afraid to venture. They dropped back and retired, and in a moment they were out of sight. The rangers, not apprehending any danger, were in no condition for immediate action. There was therefore not a gun fired at the Indians. I was a mere child at the time my father was killed, and

was not at home at that time. The evening before father sent an old servant and myself to Fort Lidy after some hogs that he had left there, for the family had been in the fort with members of others families for twelve months. My father's was the outside house, eight miles from Honey Grove. They moved my father and the family to Mr. McFarland's, which was three miles from my father's, and on the road to the fort. The old servant and myself arrived at Mr. McFarland's about ten o'clock, to find my father a corpse, the family completely torn up, and the whole community filled with alarm.

With the recital of this Indian tragedy we will suspend this personal narrative for a time, and introduce the record as we have it of the work of the Methodist preacher in this section, which is now beginning to be felt.

In the fall of 1835 John H. Carr was appointed to Sulphur Fork mission by the Arkansas Conference.<sup>3</sup> His labors extended over Red River and Lamar counties. Revs. Ramsey, Overby and John B. Denton had preached irregularly on this side of Red River in 1834 and 1835, while on Miller circuit in Arkansas. John H. Carr during 1836 laid out twelve appointments on Sulphur Fork mission. In the fall of 1836 this work was left to be supplied, but the presiding elder, R. Gregory, in February, 1837, moved E. B. Duncan over from the Washington circuit, Arkansas, to the Sulphur Fork mission. About this time Wm. G. Duke, formerly a member of the Arkansas Conference, settled in Lamar County, near the Sulphur Fork. The first quarterly meeting ever held in this portion of Texas, of which we have any account, was held near where Clarksville was afterwards located, "commencing on the Saturday before the second sabbath in April," 1837. Robert Gregory, presiding elder, was in charge; William Duncan, preacher in charge, was

<sup>3</sup> The facts here given, covering the years 1835-41, are from an article by Andrew Cumming in *Texas Christian Advocate*, Aug. 8, 1857.

present, and Wm. Duke was secretary. The conference was organized with seventeen members.

In the fall of 1837 John B. Denton was appointed to this work. He came over in company with Littleton Fowler, who was on his way to the interior of Texas to join his fellow-missionaries, Alexander and Ruter. Fowler and Denton traveled up the Sulphur Fork, and at the home of Wm. Duke Fowler preached his first sermon in Texas. During the year Denton spent on this mission it was arranged to hold a camp-meeting at a place known as Shelton's camp-ground, but a short time before the time appointed for the meeting Indian depredations so demoralized the country that the meeting was not held. In the fall of 1838 Jacob Whitesides was appointed to Sulphur Fork. In September of the year 1839 a great camp-meeting was held in this country, located about three miles northeast of Clarksville. The preacher in charge, Whitesides, was absent on account of sickness. The preachers who conducted the meeting were R. Gregory, presiding elder, Wm. Duke, Wm. Craig and Wm. Mulkey. There were about thirty conversions at this meeting. This was the beginning of a general revival throughout that region, and sometime late in the year another camp-meeting was held at the camp ground near Clarksville, at which a larger number of persons were converted than before. In the fall of 1839 another circuit was formed in this region, called DeKalb, with S. Clark in charge. J. W. P. McKenzie was appointed to Sulphur Fork, and he was returned to the same charge the next year. The revival spirit which first manifested itself in 1839, continued to work through the next few years, and the Church throughout all this region prospered greatly.

During the next four years, or until this portion of the work came to be united with the main body of Texas Methodism, the preachers who labored here were successively James Graham and Wm. G. Duke on the Sul-

phur Fork, and Geo. Benedict, Jefferson Shook and David L. Bell at DeKalb, some of whom will receive further mention later. For the present we take special note of three of those who appeared here before 1840—John B. Denton, Wm. Mulkey and J. W. P. McKenzie. Denton did not serve long in the ranks of the traveling ministry, and soon took up the profession of a lawyer, and is really best remembered on account of the Indian fight in which he lost his life. He was the son of a Methodist minister, and was born in Tennessee in 1806. The family moved to Indiana, where his father soon died. He was then apprenticed to a blacksmith, who took him to Arkansas, about 1822. Denton's youth was a hard one, spent in slavery under his blacksmith master, and he was reared without educational advantages, and, he says, "almost without clothes." But possessed of ambition and gifted with no mean talents, his conversion and frequent attendance upon Methodist meetings awakened him to the point where he abandoned the blacksmith trade and took up the ministry. His early marriage to a noble young woman also helped him up in the world. His wife taught him to read and write after two children had been born. Denton became much noted locally as an orator. He preached irregularly in Arkansas and Texas during the years, 1834 and 1835, and in 1836 he was admitted into the Missouri Conference. In the fall of 1837 he was sent into Texas. According to the extract already cited from the journal of Littleton Fowler, Denton accompanied Fowler into Texas as far as Nacogdoches and San Augustine; but he had not been "employed" for a work, as the latter puts it, but had been regularly appointed by his conference to Sulphur Fork mission, and he returned and filled out the year on that charge. At the end of that year—or in the fall of 1838—Denton dropped back into the local ranks and settled at Clarksville, where he took up the practice of law, as the necessity of providing for a growing family led him to abandon



the regular ministry. He formed a law partnership with John Craig, himself a local Methodist preacher. Denton figures in the political history of that section to the extent of being one year an unsuccessful candidate for the Texan Congress.

Denton participated in a memorable Indian fight in what is now Tarrant County in 1841, in which he lost his life. The hostile Caddo Indians had located their villages on what is known as Village Creek, and from thence made murderous incursions into the white settlements to the east. In May, 1841, a company under General Tarrant attacked the savages in this locality and defeated them. After the battle Denton was sent out with a scouting party to locate the remnant of the Indians. We here append the account of this Indian fight and of the death of Denton left by Andrew Davis, who, though but a lad of thirteen at that time, had slipped away and joined the expedition against the Indians:

Denton was killed (as I might say) on our return home. On the day before the taking of the village a lone Indian was discovered. Gen. Tarrant divided the company and ordered them to cut him off from the timber and to capture him. This was nicely and quickly done. The capture of the Indian occurred on the high prairie some ten miles west of the village, at a point not far from where Fort Worth is located. Tarrant left the prairie and went into a secluded place on the river, where we remained all night. About sunset every preparation was made to kill our prisoner. He was placed upon an elevated spot a few paces from the company. He was then placed with his back against an elm tree, his hands were drawn around the tree and made secure, and his feet were tied together and secured to the tree. Then twelve men with their guns were ordered to take their position before the Indian. The scene was an awful one in its solemnity to me and to all. The men were ordered to present arms. At this moment the alarmed and terrorstricken Indian became greatly excited, and in great agony of spirit he cried aloud, "Oh man Oh man" While he did not utter the above words with distinctness, yet it was more like these words

than any other. Gen. Tarrant sent Capt. Yeary with an interpreter to the prisoner to see if he would reveal anything, for prior to this he had been sullen and would not say a word. He was made to understand that if he would tell where the village was and how to find it he should not be hurt. He made a full revelation of the whole matter, and closed by saying, "We be friends." He was relieved, but kept under guard all night. After dark Tarrant sent ten men under Henry Stout, who was ordered to go to the village, reconnoiter the same and select the point of attack, and report by 4 o'clock in the morning. This was done, and by daylight all were in motion under guidance of our trusty pilot for the village, which was reached about 9 or 9:30 in the morning.

From our position we could see the Indians passing about in every direction. We were ordered to deposit our baggage and free ourselves of every encumbrance, and be ready for the charge in five minutes. When the time was out Gen. Tarrant said: "Are you all ready?" The response was in the affirmative. Then Tarrant in a low, yet clear, distinct voice, said: "Now, my brave men, we will never all meet on earth again there is great confusion and death just ahead. I shall expect every man to fill his place and do his duty." The command to charge was given. A level prairie about three hundred yards wide lay between the command and the first huts. This distance was measured off in less than half the time I am telling it. In a moment the sound of firearms, with a voice of thunder, rang out over the alarmed and terror-stricken inhabitants of that rude city of the wilderness. Tarrant and James Bourland, with Denton, led the charge, while every other man followed with the best speed his horse could make. I was riding a mule, furnished me by Aunt Gordon. . . . Well, pardon the digression. That mule was a mule, and, just like its kind, it was slow and made me among the last to reach the enemy. As I passed the first huts I saw to my right a number of Indians. I fired into the crowd with the best aim my excited nerves would allow. In a moment our men came upon them from a different direction, and for a short time the work of death was fearful. It was here that my mule was shot from under me. I felt like that I had lost my best friend. The air was full of bullets, and I took a tree. In a moment, however, I saw a number of our men on foot,

some of them from choice, and others, like myself, because they could not help it. I left my tree and joined them. In less than an hour the village was cleared of Indians, and it seemed like the work of death was done.

Covered with dust and dirt and wet with sweat, and almost famished both for food and water, Tarrant called the little company together at a little spring. On roll-call it was found that not a man had been killed. A dozen perhaps had been unhorsed. Quite a number were hatless. As many as eight or ten were slightly wounded, but none in a painful manner. Many had made narrow escapes from death, as their rent clothes abundantly testified. Tarrant commended the men for their good behaviour and said, "Thank God, we are all here. You have had water; repair to the nearest huts and get your hands full of dried buffalo meat, and in fifteen minutes be ready for further advance."

My My How the buffalo meat was used up by those hungry men. At the expiration of the fifteen minutes Tarrant called the men together and ordered John B. Denton and Henry Stout each to take a squad of twenty men and pursue the retreating Indians, as a great number went north into the Trinity bottom by two paths leading out of the village. It so happened that I fell into the squad commanded by Capt. Henry Stout, who took the trail which led out from the northeastern part of the village. John B. Denton with his men took the trail which led out from the northwestern part of the village. Within some sixty yards of the river the trails came together. When Capt. Stout came to this point he halted and addressed his men: "Here the trail from the west unites with ours; a great many Indians have gone out on both trails; from the large cottonwoods in view we are near the river. I think it is imprudent for a little squad of men to enter such a trap, for if the Indians make a stand at all, it will be at the river."

Just at this moment someone said, "I hear the sound of horse's feet."

Captain Stout said, "That is Denton; we will wait until he comes and we will consult."

When Captain Denton came up he said, "Captain, why have you stopped?"

Stout repeated to Captain Denton what he had just said

to his men but he added, "I am willing to go as far as any other man."

Instantly and without another word Captain Denton spurred his horse on in the path. Stout followed, and their men dropped into line, and the little company, in death-like silence, moved on toward the river. We found no prepared ford, but a merely well-worn buffalo trail, which led down into the river, and went out some eighty yards below. The north bank of the river was high and covered with a closely set undergrowth of brush. Here the Indians had secreted themselves. When the company reached the point opposite and under the Indians, they opened a deadly fire upon us, it being mainly directed upon our men at the front. Captain Denton was instantly killed, and Captain Stout had his arm broken. In this condition of affairs no command was given. The scene of death and the moment of suspense was awful to endure. Capt. Yeary hollowed out at the top of his voice, "Why in the h—l don't you move your men out to where we can see the enemy? We will all be killed here."

The men began at once a kind of irregular retreat, and Capt. Stout had so far recovered from his shock as to be able to say, "Men, do the best you can for yourselves; I am wounded and powerless."

About this time some one exclaimed: "Captain Denton is killed." The shot was so deadly that there was no death struggle. He had balanced himself in his saddle, raised his gun and closed one eye, intending to deal death upon the enemy, when the death shock struck him. When his death was discovered his muscles were gradually relaxing, and his gun, yet in his hand, was inclining to the ground. The men nearest to him took him from his horse and laid him on the ground, and then we returned to the command at the village. We feared that after we left the Indians would scalp Captain Denton and otherwise mutilate his body, but this was not done. A squad of men were sent back to river to bring Denton's body, which was done. I am glad to this day that I am one of the number to volunteer to go back and, if need be, to brave death to recover the body of Captain Denton.

About 4 or 4:30 p. m. the body of Captain Denton was securely tied upon a gentle horse, and the command moved out from the village, with some eighty head of horses and fifteen or twenty head of cattle taken from the village. We moved up the



river a point not far from Fort Worth, and there spent the night. Early next morning we crossed the river at a point where the timber was narrow. After crossing the river we travelled in the direction of Bird's Station, aiming for Bonham as our objective point. At about 11 a. m. we halted on a prairie on the south side of a creek, with a high bank on the north. On one of these elevations Captain Denton was buried.

The remains of Denton were exhumed in 1860 and reburied on Chisholm's ranch; but in 1901 the Old Settler's Association of Denton County took charge of the remains and reburied them on the courthouse square in Denton, and erected a monument to the memory of this pioneer—for whom both the county and the town are named.

Two sons of Jno. B. Denton became itinerant preachers—J. F. and John B., of the West Texas Conference; and another son, Dr. A. M. Denton, served for many years as superintendent of the State Asylum for the Insane at Austin. J. B. Denton's widow was married in later years to Abner McKenzie, a brother of Rev. J. W. P. McKenzie; and a daughter of this union became the wife of Milton Ragsdale, and Miss Belle Ragsdale and Allen K. Ragsdale are children of this marriage.

The name Mulkey is so well known in our later history that we pause here long enough to obtain an outline of William Mulkey, the father of the Texas Mulkeys, who appears on the Red River in an obscure way before 1840. "At the third session of our Conference," says Andrew Hunter, the nestor of Arkansas Methodism,<sup>4</sup> "there came to us by transfer from Tennessee one whose name should be preserved from oblivion. That was William Mulkey. He was a unique character. He was one of the best English scholars I have ever known." Continuing, the writer says:

His first appointment was in the Choctaw nation, as the colleague of McKenzie. Knowing Mulkey as we knew him after-

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Jewell's History of Methodism in Arkansas.



wards, it was a great mistake to send him to preach to Indians through an interpreter. It was like putting a steam engine to a common road wagon. Mulkey ran away from the interpreter and left him wondering where he would take up. In the fall the presiding elder brought him down into the white settlements, in Sevier and Hempstead counties, where, after the novelty growing out of the preacher's manner passed away, he did most effective work. Br. Mulkey served the church a number of years as a missionary to the colored people on the Red River plantations, the owners giving him a good support. He located afterwards; went to Nashville, Tenn., and afterwards to Texas. My recollection is that he took to the lecturing field, and in traveling in a stage coach at one time became very sick and was left at a roadside house, where he died. He left several children, sons and daughters. One of his sons is in the evangelistic work in Texas, and his praise is in all the churches.

Mr. Hunter adds this anecdote of William Mulkey:

We were sitting together talking on various topics. The question was raised as to how much it was a christian man's duty to bear from the wicked without resistance. I remember asking him the question direct: Brother Mulkey, suppose a wicked fellow should come up to you and say, "Bro. Mulkey, I am going to whip you"—what would you do? To which Mulkey replied, "I would say to him—'Sir, if the Lord gives me grace I will bear it; but if not, woe be to your hide.'"

While associated with McKenzie in the Indian mission field the two preachers found it necessary or convenient to live with their families in the same house. On one occasion during McKenzie's absence, and while Mulkey had gathered the two families for morning devotion, one of the Mulkey boys and a girl of the other family interrupted prayer by engaging in an open fight. Mulkey suspended his prayer, ordered the others to remain upon their knees, and took the offenders into an adjoining room and settled with them. Quiet being re-

stored he returned, and in the midst of an awful stillness, finished his prayer.

John W. P. McKenzie, after entering Texas, came to be one of the great figures in Methodist history in North Texas, as Robert Alexander became in the south, and both alike enjoyed an active career of more than forty years in the state of their adoption. Like Alexander also, McKenzie was of Scotch extraction and a native of North Carolina, where he was born April 26, 1806. His mother was converted in girlhood under Francis Asbury, and she became a staunch Methodist. Her adherence to the Methodists cost her for a time her place in the family circle, as her parents, Scotch Seceders, were so prejudiced against the Methodists that her father demanded that she renounce her faith or leave home. She chose to do the latter, though but a girl of fourteen. But her firmness not only won her place back in the home, but won her parents to the Methodist faith. McKenzie's father was thrown from a wagon and killed, leaving the son when but a youth with his widowed mother. When but fourteen years of age McKenzie had shown such advancement in his books and such a thirst for knowledge that he was entered in the University of North Carolina. After two years he was sent to the University of Alabama at Athens. Here he graduated with distinction, and for awhile filled the chair of ancient languages in his alma mater.<sup>5</sup> In 1829 he returned to his native state, and in the same year he was united in marriage to Miss Matilda Parks, whom he found to be through all the activities of his later life a helpmeet indeed. In 1831 he removed to

<sup>5</sup> The facts about Dr. McKenzie's education here given are from a Memoir contained in the Journal of the North Texas Conference, 1881. Dr. J. H. McLean says in a biographical sketch, Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, July, 1909, that Dr. McKenzie was educated at the University of Georgia, then called Franklin College, "a few years after Bishop Pierce and Senator Toombs were graduated from the same institution," and that "it was there he received the life-long sobriquet of 'Old Master' for having quelled a difficulty among the students that had baffled the faculty, and by way of compliment the president remarked that 'Old Master himself could not have done better.'"

Maury County, Tennessee, and for five years he conducted a successful school near Columbia. "Up to this time," says a memoir, "he had been quite irregular in his religious life. Here he was thoroughly awakened . . . and he was regularly licensed to preach." In 1836 he was admitted on trial into the Tennessee Conference, but having failed to reach the seat of the conference he met Bishop Morris in Little Rock, Ark., when he was ordained deacon and sent as a missionary to the Choctaw Indians. We have seen that Dr. McKenzie received his first appointment in Texas in 1839. Of this work he says:<sup>6</sup> "The writer was appointed to a field of labor south of Red River (1839), and his first circuit contained thirty-two appointments. This circuit was made in four weeks; but soon the cry, 'Come over and help us,' became so urgent that ere we were aware we had a six week's circuit. The labor was arduous, but there was no safe way to say No. In those days men came to Texas to work, not to hide away from a scene of failure, or to seek a soft place. . . . The receipts on our first circuit in Texas amounted to fifty-six dollars and seventy-five cents, and a wife and four children were to be supported. But the wife was not a mere boarder but a help-meet—a producer—and by rigid economy and constant industry we managed somehow to live."

Dr. McKenzie, whose heart was ever inclined toward teaching, saw the dire need in this raw country for a good school of high grade. Besides, his health was beginning to fail under the strain of attending so large a circuit. In 1841 he took the supernumerary relation, and settling four miles west of Clarksville, opened his first school in a log house, with sixteen pupils. This was the beginning of McKenzie College, Methodism's first school in North Texas, which opened about eighteen months after Ruttersville, her first school in the south, had been

<sup>6</sup> Introduction to North Texas Pulpit, a book of sermons published by J. W. Hill in 1880.

launched. Of the McKenzie school and her "Old Master" much more will need to be said as our history progresses. At this point we will turn again to the narrative of Andrew Davis, and extract his account of how a boy of that day could reach his thirteenth or fourteenth year without sight or sound of preacher or religious service of any sort, and find an example of the benevolent and forceful influence of the McKenzies in bringing the wild and uncouth children of that country into subjection.

I suppose it was about one year after my father's death that I went to Rev. McKenzie's. My life was so divided and unsettled that I can hardly say where I did live. I hung on to my step-mother. I knew nothing any better. She was kind to me as my own dear mother could have been. . . . My step-mother could not think of remaining at the old home. She therefore had to get protection wherever she could find it, that made life unsettled and unsatisfactory until she married again, and by that change procured a home again. Though near a hundred miles from Pecan Point, where I was born, and the old friends of my father, they soon heard of his death, and also the character of life I was living, and knowing that there was not anything in my environments that promised the least future good to me, they began to plan to get me back to Red River county, and if possible to get a home for me at Rev. J. W. P. McKenzie's.

Among the friends of Red River county that took an active interest in me on my father's account were Mr. John Robbins and Ibbie Gordon. They conferred together and planned for the accomplishment of my return. They finally concluded to engage some teamster hauling supplies to Fort Lidy to hunt me out and bring me back and leave me at Mr. Robbin's. They finally found a teamster by the name of Crowder, who, by the way, had been a soldier at Fort Lidy and knew me. Providence soon ordered that I was at the Fort when Crowder arrived. When Mr. Crowder named his business to me I in a moment decided that I would not go. I loved my freedom. I loved the wild scenes of frontier life—felt that I had as soon die as to leave them. Additionally the reflection came to my mind that

I was so far behind in everything that life would be miserable if I should go back. After long importunity I consented to go back. We were on the road two weeks. Mr. Crowder was driving an ox team. . . . Some days we never travelled more than six miles. . . . My imagination was all the while filling my mind with scenes and surroundings that would be embarrassing to me. Finally we arrived at Mr. Robbins's. . . . Near by the place where our old double-log house stood there had been reared a large two-story framed building, with all the modern improvements and conveniences, and painted until it looked as white as snow, with window blinds painted in impressive contrast. The floor was finely carpeted, and nice mates were profusely spread about. Mr. Robbins met us in the most cordial manner. He seemed glad to see me and said I must enjoy myself again at the old home. My father had improved the place and sold it to him some years before. The family, even the children, saw my embarrassment, and seemed to sympathize with me. I was dressed in buck-skin clothes from head to foot. These clothes were glazed with a mixture of grease (mostly bear's oil) and dirt. The elbows, knees, and even the seat of my pants, were all worn and patched, which I thought made me look like a comic picture. Mr. Robbins had a large number of colored people, and the colored cook, with a parcel of little negroes, came upon the scene and stood around and looked at me as if I was on exhibition. The room all furnished with fine chairs, many of them finely cushioned, all so clean and nice, that I felt my clothes would soil them. I had been used to old chairs, patched up to make them go as far as possible, and stools and benches. But finally I had to come to terms and set down on these clean, nice chairs. . . .

I was at Mr. Robbin's about two weeks. . . . Finally one day about 11 a. m. Mr. Robbins came out to where I was playing, and said Uncle Ab had come for me—to come on up to the house; dinner would soon be ready. He took me by the hand, and as we walked on to the house I asked him who Uncle Ab was. He said he was a brother of McKenzie's, and superintended all the affairs of the home and farm. As we approached the gate Mr. Robbins said, "That is Uncle Ab's horse and buggy there." The buggy right new had never been soiled in the least. I had never seen one so clean and nice. I knew what it was for,



but me to sit in it with my dingy clothes would soil it. . . . Dinner over, Uncle Ab seemed to be in a hurry. The farewell was taken, and at once we started for my new home. I was perpetually uneasy about the fine new buggy, afraid my clothes would soil it. I labored not to touch against the buggy any more than I could help. . . . Uncle Ab saw that I was not well at ease, and labored to draw me out in conversation about the frontier, about my past life and all the rough scenes through which I had passed. When we were nearing our destination Uncle Ab said to me, "John and Matilda are not at home; they are at the camp-meeting. Some of the servants are at home. We will stay at home to-night, and go out to the camp-ground in the morning." The term camp-ground I did not understand. I had known a great deal about common camp-life, and also about military encampments, but had never heard the word used in that way. It was impossible for me to eliminate from my mind the idea of military. I had never been to any religious encampment up to that day. I had never seen any kind of religious services, nor had any person ever talked to me on the subject of religion. . . . Next morning we started for the camp-ground. Uncle Ab said it was 12 or 15 miles from John's out there. We passed through Clarksville. It had grown wonderfully in the past three or four years. But on we went at slow pace until near 11 o'clock a. m. Uncle Ab said we would soon be there. We were in post oak timber. I began to look out for camp. Sure enough directly the encampment began to come into view. "Yes," said I to myself, "there is trouble here." Here, there and everywhere in all directions, covering a large space of ground, were the white tents and covered wagons. There were a large number of horses, mules and oxen tied all about the tents. . . . Uncle Ab drove up among the tents and got out. After hitching his horse he said, "John's in the pulpit now." I don't think that I had ever heard the word pulpit used before. And the whole thing to me assumed the appearance of a military encampment or gathering. What kind of addition a pulpit could be was a great mystery to me. Just as these reflections were passing through my mind Uncle Ab said, "Let us go on up to the stand." As he said that he started on, I moving in a slow reluctant manner. When we arrived in about fifty yards of the stand, as Uncle Ab called it, I saw Brother McKenzie in

some kind of rough looking box. I saw a large collection of people, men, women and children, all seated in a quiet mood. Brother McKenzie the only person that seemed to be in trouble. He seemed to be as restless as though he stood on embers, running first to one end of the box and then to the other, as though he wanted to get out of the box. He was talking loudly, and his gestures were of the most violent character. At once I concluded that for some cause they had him confined in the box so that he could not get out, or that he feared to come out. It all indicated some serious trouble to me, that whatever the nature of the trouble it was just reaching a crisis, that some one was in trouble and some one was going to be hurt. So I decided to keep out of it. Just at this moment we were passing a large post oak. I said, "Mr. McKenzie, you can go on up there; I'll stop here at this tree." "Oh, come on," he said, "we will get a seat behind the pulpit." I said, "I am not going there; you can go on." He saw the state of my mind and that it would not do to try to force me, so he started, but after going a few steps he turned around and said, "Now will you stay here until I come back?" I replied, "Well, I reckon I will" but I intended to take to the woods if trouble came. Mr. McKenzie went on up to the arbor and sit down back of the pulpit. I kept to the tree watching with a hawk's eye every movement. My eye was on J. W. P. McKenzie all the time. He seemed the center of interest. All at once, like a flash, he bounded out of the box, ran around out of my sight. Just at this moment the congregation stood up. "There, there," I said "he's broke out of the box; the row is going to come off now." But just at the moment of my most intense excitement and alarm there arose from the congregation the sound of music. It reverberated to the highest heaven and broke in mellow and melting tones among the boughs of the trees. "Well," said I to myself, "there cannot be any trouble here; the whole thing is a mystery to me, but there cannot be any danger." So I ventured to sit down in the shade of the tree and wait for my friend Uncle Ab. After awhile I saw Uncle Ab and his brother coming. The manner in which J. W. P. McKenzie met me and talked to me impressed me deeply and won my heart at the very first, and taking my hand he said, "Come on with me up to the tent and see Mrs.

McKenzie; you need a mother, and she will be a mother to you from this on."

The tent and all about were alive with people, all clean and well-dressed. I still had on my well glazed suit of buck-skin. I was greatly embarrassed. The children stood around and gazed at me as the wonder of the day. But Mrs. McKenzie met me with such an expression of love and sympathy that no mortal could keep from loving her. She led me away from the crowd, back into the cook room, and said to an old colored woman that seemed to have universal oversight of the cooking department, "This, Aunt Dicey, is our adopted boy. I want you to spread him a good dinner here on this side table and see that he gets plenty to eat." Sister McKenzie sent a young man to Clarks-ville that afternoon after cloth to make me a suit of clothes. By 2 p. m. next day I laid aside my deer-skin suit of clothing and put the new suit on; but I was still shy about the arbor; never went under it, but stood about the edges of the congregation, and sometimes would sit down on the outside. This camp-meeting was the first religious assembly I ever saw, the first preaching and praying I ever heard. . . . J. W. P. McKenzie was the first preacher I ever saw. I shall never forget that Sister McKenzie, though cumbered with care all the time, gave marked attention to me. . . . The camp-meeting closed at a late hour on Sunday night. Everybody seemed to be happy, and on Monday morning all the tenters pulled up stakes and returned home. Late on the afternoon of this day my life began in my new home.

We can rest assured that Andrew Davis is now in safe hands. We shall hear from him, and many others who, from time to time, came under the influence of Dr. McKenzie and his noble wife.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE YEAR 1841-1842

THE years 1841-42 were fruitful ones for the Church in Texas, and witnessed the spread of the work into many hitherto unoccupied localities. On the southwestern border the Victoria country, which had called so loudly the year before for a preacher, was covered in 1841 by J. P. Sneed, who succeeded in organizing churches in Victoria, Gonzales, Port Lavaca and Seguin. The statistics returned for that section in the fall showed 64 white members and 24 colored. On the northwest frontier, covered by Austin circuit, embracing all the upper Colorado, John Haynie reported at the close of the year 1841, 147 white members and 11 colored. From the new Harrison circuit, which was rapidly forming the connecting link between Texas proper and the Red River territory, a membership of 334 white and 24 colored was shown at the end of the year.

The year 1841 saw the organization of the first permanent Methodist Church in Houston, under the pastorate of Thomas O. Summers, according to Mrs. Blandin, a local church historian.<sup>1</sup> "Previous to Mr. Summers' arrival in Houston," says this author, "Mr. Alexander had organized a class of fourteen; but the first permanent organization was made in 1841 by Mr. Summers." Jesse Hord, who included Houston in his circuit in 1838-39, records in his journal in April, 1839, the following item relating to a church in Houston: "Our church or class in

<sup>1</sup> History of Shearn Church, p. 23.

this populous city numbers 14, joined by letter. Bro. Stringfellow was appointed class-leader & Bro. Fisher class steward. This I presume is the first Methodist class ever organized in the city; if one had been previously formed I think I should have heard something of it, having canvassed the city from center to circumference in the distribution of tracts." Although Hord does not say in so many words that he organized this church, the fact is made plain in the journal of another early preacher in Houston. From "Allen's Reminiscences of Texas" we have the following:<sup>2</sup> "Just a year after my first preaching in Houston [this would make it, according to previous entries, March 31, 1839] organized the Presbyterian Church, the first Church in the city, ten members. . . . During the winter and spring of 1839, many ministers of different denominations appeared in Houston. . . . The first Methodist Church was organized soon after the Presbyterian by a Bro. Hord, as also the Protestant Episcopal, all within a month or six weeks." The fact then is, according to these concurrent testimonies, that Hord organized a Methodist Church in Houston in April, 1839, with fourteen members. Whether this organization disintegrated or suspended its activities is another matter. The historian of Houston Methodism thinks it did, and credits Mr. Summers, as above, with giving Methodism a permanent existence in Houston. The same writer adds: "As there was no church building in Houston, and the capital had been removed to Austin, and the old capitol converted into storehouses, Mr. Summers preached in a room over a store on Capitol Avenue, between Milam and Louisiana Streets."

Among the earliest members of the church in Houston were Charles Shearn, Alexander McGowen, Mrs. Winn (daughter of Dr. Ruter), Capt. Mosely Baker, Darius Gregg, Dr. John L. Bryan and wife, Francis Moore

<sup>2</sup> S-W Historical Quarterly, XVIII, 303.



(mayor in 1843), and G. S. Hardeastle. Charles Shearn came from England and settled in Texas in 1834. In 1837 he located in Houston and entered business. Religiously he was described as "an old fashioned Methodist, loyal to the doctrines, faithful to duty, and generous with his time and money in the interest of the church." He was one of Houston's first class-leaders, and was on the first board of stewards, filling both places in his church for more than thirty years. We shall have occasion to note more in detail his services to the church in Houston and to the Church at large in Texas in after years.

Alexander McGowen was a true fellow-laborer with Shearn in Houston. A native of North Carolina, he came to Houston in 1839. He became prominently identified with public affairs in the city and state, serving for three terms as mayor of Houston, and taking a prominent part as a member of the constitutional convention of 1845. He was converted in Houston, and joined in the organization of the first church. He served as trustee of his church for fifty-odd years and for many years as steward. Mr. McGowen died in 1892, and his funeral service was held at Shearn Church, conducted by Dr. G. C. Rankin, then pastor.

Darius Gregg and G. S. Hardeastle were both among the earliest settlers of Houston; both successful in business affairs, and both were among the first officials and loyal supporters of the first Methodist church in Houston.

Like the Roman centurion, who "loves our nation and hath built us a synagogue," the name of T. W. House holds an honorable place in Methodist annals in Houston, though he was never a member of the church. Mr. House, who was a native of England, located in Houston in 1837 and entered business, his first venture being a bakery and confectionery. After a few years he founded a bank and established the largest wholesale dry goods

and grocery house in the state. He became prominently connected with many other interests and succeeded in amassing a large fortune. Mr. House married the only daughter of Charles Shearn, and this relation, together with his early formed friendship for Dr. Summers—both being Englishmen—led him to devote much interest and means toward church building in Houston. He was a trustee of the Methodist church until his death in 1880, and after his death a son, T. W. House, Jr., succeeded to that office, so that for sixty-five years the name of T. W. House appears on the records of Shearn Church as a trustee. Col. Edward M. House, of recent international note, is another son of T. W. House.

Mr. Summers's work in Houston and Galveston in 1841-42 resulted in getting under way church buildings in both cities. The church in Galveston was erected in 1841-42 and was named Ryland Chapel, in honor of the Rev. Wm. Ryland, of Washington, D. C., who contributed liberally to its cost. The first church building in Houston was launched at a quarterly meeting held there in March, 1842, by Robert Alexander. The building committee was composed of Charles Shearn, T. W. House, D. Gregg, A. McGowen and G. S. Harcastle. The building, thirty-five by sixty feet, with a sixteen foot annex, and galleries for colored people, was erected of brick, and was the first brick church in Texas. It was not completed or used until 1844.

From various sources we have a few glimpses of how the work was going on here and there in the interior of the country during this period. A contributor to the *Texas Wesleyan Banner* in 1850 remembers the following:

On the 4th of July, 1841, a Sunday school was organized in Yellow Prairie, then Milam county, Texas, by Brothers Alexander Thompson and D. W. Wright. It was well attended and much interest manifested, and while some who attended that

school have died and gone to reap their reward in the unfading climes of glory, many others are duly pious and useful members of society.

In the latter part of 1841 the first camp-meeting ever held in San Antonio Prairie was held at Waugh Camp-Ground, then Milam county, by Bros. R. Crawford, D. N. V. Sullivan, D. N. Wright and C. W. Lewis. There were about twenty old fashioned conversions.

In the fall of 1841, previous to the meeting held at Waugh Camp-Ground, there was a camp-meeting held on Cedar Creek in Robertson county (the first held at that place), by Bros. S. A. Williams, R. Crawford, D. N. Wright, W. C. Lewis, D. Carl and J. H. Collard. Many spreading their tents to shelter them from the sun by day and the dew by night; using the hindgates and other parts of their wagons for tables. They ate their frugal meals, worshipping God in the simplicity and beauty of holiness. About 18 or 20 were happily converted at this meeting.

Dr. Summers made a camp-meeting tour in the interior during 1841, and in a series of communications to the church paper in New York he reports on some of these and other conditions and incidents. He assisted in camp-meetings at Ruttersville and Montgomery camp-ground, and at both places he and J. W. Kenney carried on the meetings, due to the sickness and absence of many other preachers. "While at Ruttersville," he says, "I made inquiries in respect to the college and was pleased to learn that it was increasingly prosperous. There are in both departments between 70 and 80 students. They are progressing rapidly in their studies; and what is better still, a number of them have recently given their hearts to God. . . . A building, 52 by 26, two stories high, will soon be finished for the better accommodations of the male students."

Another circumstance noted was much sickness among the preachers, and their poor financial condition. The health of Littleton Fowler had failed, Dr. Summers says, and he had been driven into the cornfield to seek

a support for his family. "I have since inquired into the affair," says the writer, "and find that it is not only true of him, but of some others of our number, if not all, who have families to support." It is but one of many references to be found in contemporary records of the straits the preachers often found themselves in. A few quarterly conference reports will explain these circumstances, as well as reveal to us what business was carried on in those days, and how. Here are the full minutes of a quarterly conference for Montgomery circuit in 1840, given *verbatim et literatim*:

Second quarterly m. Conference for Montgomery circuit June 20th 1840 Spring Creek.

Members Present

Moses Speer A P

Robert Crawford A P

John Woolam Ex

H. G. Johnson

Richard Davidson C L

James B Hogan C L

Question 1 are there any complaints or appeals

A none

Br John C. Woolam came dewly recommended Befour the quarterly M. Conference Montgomery circuit for License to preach as local Preacher and was dewly Elected

Br Richard Davidson came before the quarterly M. Conference Dewly Recommended For License to Exhort and is dewly authorized by Conference to use his gifts that way

Robinsons Camp ground was appointed for the next quarterly M. Conference Sept 26th & 27th 1840

Collected at Robinsons Society 17\$ Good money Texas \$21.50  
John Collard T Cooks Lindleys Mrs Landrums Dickensons  
Cypruss Spring Creek Sister McCurley Br Files Grimes  
Prairie Black Prairie \$12 texas promisory notes Br Benj Robinsons Parkers Huntsville

Red and approved

MOSES SPEER PRES

James B. Hogan Sec

Reed of Bro Wm Robinson sercuit steward \$78 25 cents in  
Texas treasury notes and in arkan [obscured] Funds 10\$  
S. A. WILLIAMS

Reed of Wm Robinson

\$7.25 cents

Moses Speer

The minutes of the first quarterly conference of 1841 are exceedingly brief, and show that the preachers departed as they came—with empty pockets:

First Quarterly Meeting Conference for Montgomery Circuit held in Crabbs Prairie on the 17th day of April A D 1841

Members present Samuel A Williams presiding Elder in the chair R W Owen P. C. J H Collard A. S. Richard Davidson & Wm Robinson L. Stewards

Br W Robinson B. B. Stansell & J Matthews Class leaders

Question are there any complaints or appeals Ans none

C Dukeman nominated & appointed Circuit Steward also C White nominated & appointed C Steward

Moved & seconded that the next quarterly Meeting be held at Father Spillers on 5th & 6th of June next carried appointments on the circuit

[Here follows a list of twenty-four appointments. No financial report or other business. Signed by S. A. Williams, P. E., and J. H. Collard, Sec.]

The minutes of the third quarterly conference show a financial report of "ten dollars Texas \$1.12 specie" from one point, and \$20 (unspecified) from another.

Dropping over into 1842 conditions do not appear to have much improved on this circuit. The minutes of the fourth quarterly meeting close with a little unconscious humor:

What are the collections this quarter not one cent  
On motion it was ordered we now adjourn



The small monetary dividends accruing to the ministry did not seem to discourage others who felt moved to preach. An examination of the quarterly conference records for Montgomery circuit, for example, through the years 1839-41 show that eight applicants were granted license to preach. These were Daniel Carl, Nathan Shook—who was licensed “on condition that he place property in the hands of Bro. Joshua Robinson and J. H. Collard to liquidate his debts in the United States”—John C. Woolam, J. H. Collard, R. W. Owen, Wm. Robinson, Richard Davidson and Isaac Tabor. Six of these were recommended for admission into the traveling connection; namely, Carl, Shook, Woolam, Collard, Owen, Davidson. Another item worth noting is, that at the second quarterly conference for this circuit in 1842 it was “Resolved that the stewards of this circuit be and they are hereby appointed a committee to receive donations in land, money and other property for the purpose of building and furnishing with heavy furniture a parsonage for Montgomery circuit.” This is the first instance we find of such steps being taken in Texas.

Referring again to the financial support of the preachers, we have seen that the Mission Board in New York was at this time in such an embarrassing situation as to be unable to relieve the forces in Texas, contributing nothing in 1840, and only a small amount in 1841. The missionary appropriations for Texas for the years 1838-41 were as follows: <sup>3</sup>

Year ending May, 1838	\$1761.44
“ 1839	1435.29
“ 1840	No entry for Texas
“ 1841	643.00

<sup>3</sup> From Annual Reports. Information furnished by Wm. B. Tower, in charge of Bureau of Surveys and Research, Board of Foreign Missions, Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Tower says in a letter to the author: “After May, 1841, expenditures for Domestic Missions are not given in geographical groups; they are chiefly like this—‘Draft of Bishop ———, favor of ———,’ Texas minutes are not available for that period,

Notwithstanding the poor financial reports, the preachers and the Church prospered in spiritual things, as the returns made at the next conference showed a net increase of nearly one thousand in membership. The exact figures were:<sup>4</sup> 2352 white members, 407 colored, and 36 local preachers, making the whole number in society 2795, a net increase over last year of 917. The conference met in San Augustine on December 23, with Bishop Thomas A. Morris presiding. Bishop Morris had traveled overland from St. Louis, in company with John Clark and family and J. W. Whipple, who had come from Illinois to enter the work in Texas. We will let Bishop Morris add some observations on his trip to Texas, in which he gives an account of the conference:<sup>5</sup>

The road from Nachotoches to the Sabine is broad, much travelled, and though passing over a broken country, would be tolerably pleasant if it were not torn to pieces by the cotton wagons; but we were almost constantly meeting teams of horses, mules or oxen, mostly from Texas, drawing ponderous loads of this staple to Nachotoches, the great cotton depot for eastern Texas, as well as its own vicinity, in consequence of which much of the road was in bad condition. . . .

Friday, 17th, we came down to Sabine river, at Gaines's Ferry; stopped on the east shore; took our last luncheon in the United States; crossed over and were within the limits of the "virgin republic." . . . Pendleton is the name of a poor village on the west bank, containing some six or eight houses, most of which are empty. Leaving this we passed over level ground, ploughing through white sand, which tried the strength of our teams for four miles, when we rose onto high ground and entered the border of that interesting part of Texas called the Redlands, which is thickly settled and well improved. Our first night in the republic was passed at Redland Camp, near a pure fountain of excellent spring water, clear, soft and pleasant to

so I was unable to trace down these names and find which ones represented the Texas Conference. . . . For this reason expenditures for 1842, 1843, and 1844 cannot be given here."

<sup>4</sup> Report of Board of Missions.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas A. Morris, *Miscellany*, p. 324 et seq.

the taste, a short distance east of Milam. Here we found ourselves in a pleasant and plentiful country. Whatever we desired for ourselves, or horses, was readily obtained, and on reasonable terms, compared with what we had been paying for the same articles in Arkansas and Louisiana. . . . Saturday morning, 18th. After breakfast we passed through Milam, the seat of justice for Sabine county, which is built on the red clay, and contains from twelve to twenty houses, nearly the color of the dust in their streets. In sight of town was a gallows still standing, where there had recently been an execution, the particulars of which we did not learn, and I only advert to it to remind bad people in the United States, that if they do not wish to be hung, they had better keep away from Texas. . . . There are in this part of the republic an enterprising community, and strong indications of growing wealth among them.

Saturday evening we reached San Augustine, the seat of justice for the county of the same name. This is one of the largest towns in Texas containing some eight hundred or one thousand inhabitants. The houses are mostly frame, and are painted white. There is in the town an academy, of respectable appearance; also a new Methodist chapel, about forty by thirty feet, just brought into use, but not finished. We were glad to finish this tedious journey. My travelling companions had come from the extreme north part of Illinois, more than one thousand miles, with the same teams, and I had accompanied them from St. Louis to this place about seven hundred and fifty miles. Our time from St. Louis through was two months, but deducting the Sabbath and other days on which we stopped to preach or rest, we were actually on the road thirty-seven days, and slept in our own camp twenty nights. . . .

The Texas conference met on the 23d instant, in the city of San Augustine. Most of the members were present; two were absent, and one or two of those in attendance were in poor health. There has been no death among them in the past year; but some of the first band of missionaries are nearly worn out. The conference was reinforced by four transferred, one readmitted, and three young men admitted on trial; one located, and two probationers were discontinued. The whole number of names on the Minutes is twenty-three—sixteen are members of conference, and the balance are on trial. . . . Seven deacons and

two elders were ordained, all local brethren except three of the deacons. . . . The missionary meeting was held on Monday night; and though the weather was damp and chilly, it was well attended; the amount collected was seventy-four dollars and forty-four cents. Some jewelry was thrown in, after which one gave four town lots; another fifteen lots; one one hundred acres of land, two others three hundred and twenty acres each, and one a quarter of a league. . . . Tuesday evening the conference terminated a harmonious and pleasant session of five days, and every man repaired to his own field of labor, ready to spend and be spent in its cultivation.

At this conference Charles W. Thomas, Jacob Crawford, James G. Johnson and George West were admitted on trial. H. D. Palmer, Daniel Carl, Robert Crawford, John Haynie and Josiah W. Whipple were ordained deacons. Dr. A. P. Manly was granted a location, and S. A. Williams took the supernumerary relation. The transfers into the conference were John Clark, J. W. Whipple and Orceneth Fisher, all from the Illinois Conference, and William Craig from the Mississippi Conference. The appointments were as follows:

San Augustine District—

Francis Wilson, P. E.

San Augustine, Geo. West, Samuel A. Williams, supernumerary.

Nacogdoches, William Craig.

Harrison, to be supplied.

Panola, Jacob Crawford.

Jasper, to be supplied.

Liberty, Joseph Sneed.

Crockett, Nathan Shook, Jas. H. Collard.

Galveston District—

Robert Alexander, P. E.

Brazoria, Jesse Hord.

Montgomery, Daniel V. N. Sullivan.

Huntsville, Henderson D. Palmer.

Nashville, to be supplied.

Franklin, Jas. G. Johnson.

## Rutersville District—

John Clark, P. E.

Rutersville, to be supplied.

Austin, Josiah W. Whipple.

Washington, Orceneth Fisher.

Matagorda, Robert Crawford.

Victoria, Daniel Carl.

Chauncey Richardson, President Rutersville College.

Chas. W. Thomas, Professor Ancient Languages, Rutersville College.

Littleton Fowler and John Haynie, Agents Rutersville College.

The preachers are now becoming too numerous to give an extended introduction to each one as he appears in the appointments; but a way will be found of giving each one due notice somewhere in this record. Suffice it to say now that the three new recruits from Illinois were all strong men. Fisher had been in Texas before, as we have seen. John Clark is to remain in Texas but two years, but he cuts no small figure in our history, in more ways than one. Josiah W. Whipple is to become a household word over a large section of our Church in Texas for many years.

After the close of the conference at San Augustine Bishop Morris traveled on to Washington, where he sought out the grave of Dr. Ruter, and he visited Rutersville, Bastrop and Austin. He then journeyed to Houston and Galveston, and returned home. Bishop Morris writes of his visit to the grave of Dr. Ruter: "The mournful spot sought for was easily found without a guide, the grave being enclosed by a stone wall and covered with a white marble slab, three feet wide and six long, with a suitable inscription. At the foot of the slab stands a small hickory tree, hung with Spanish moss, waving in the breeze over the charnal-house. As we stood under this three reading the solemn epitaph, the sun was disappearing in the west, while a thousand



thoughts of the past rushed upon our minds, and forcibly reminded us that our own days would soon be numbered. With Dr. Ruter I had often united in preaching the Gospel to crowded assemblies in Ohio and Kentucky. He now rests from all his toil, enjoying the promised reward. . . . When we read on the cold marble, 'thirty-seven years an itinerant minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and superintendent of the first mission of that Church in the republic of Texas,' and then remembered that the same mission had already become a respectable annual conference, and was still increasing, the thought arose, whereunto will this mission grow, and what cause of rejoicing must this be to its first superintendent forever? Our visiting the graveyard at sundown in a village where we knew no one, and where no one knew us, seemed to excite some curiosity. A colored boy, sent no doubt for the purpose, came and inquired whence we journeyed? Our answer was, 'Into all the world.' That night we were kindly received and entertained at the house of brother Lynch, sheriff of the county, two miles west of town."

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE YEAR 1842-1843

THE summer and fall of 1842 were the gloomiest Texas had known since the battle of San Jacinto, according to H. S. Thrall, a preacher who arrived in Texas that year. The Mexicans had sent another army into Texas, and San Antonio had fallen into their hands. They attempted, or threatened, to blockade the Texas coast, which intimidated trade and travel from that direction. The government had temporarily abandoned Austin for the more interior location of Washington. The Indians were unusually hostile and threatening along the frontier. The whole lower country was flooded with water from excessive rains and overflows. Texas money was almost worthless, and there was no "good money" in circulation. Cotton brought from three to five cents a pound in Houston, when it could be delivered there.

The conference met on December 23d at Bastrop. The bishop didn't come—a most disappointing announcement to any conference, especially in those days. The venerable Bishop Roberts, who had been appointed to hold the conference, was taken sick at the Arkansas Conference, and had to return to his home in Indiana, where he soon died. Robert Alexander was elected president of the conference, and Thomas O. Summers secretary. The sessions were held in a back room of a storehouse, some ten by twelve feet, containing a fireplace, and in a vacant storeroom nearby temporary seats were placed where a larger company might assemble for the preaching services. Nearly all the preachers were present, and it is

said a revival spirit prevailed, resulting in many conversions and some fifteen additions to the church.

At this conference J. T. P. Irvine, Jno. C. Woolam, Robert B. Wells, Preston W. Hobbs, and Wm. C. Lewis were admitted on trial. John W. Kenney was readmitted. James H. Collard and Nathan Shook were elected to deacon's orders, and Daniel V. N. Sullivan to elder's orders, but they were not ordained, owing to the absence of the bishop. The reports of the preachers showed a net increase in membership over the previous year of 956, making a total of 3738 members, of whom 3202 were white, including 40 local preachers, and 536 colored. The Church in Texas had evidently been imposed upon by some one or more unworthy preachers, as a resolution was adopted at this conference to the effect that "no preacher who has been expelled from the Church elsewhere should have his ministerial character recognized here until his credentials are restored by a vote of the Conference that had previously taken action in his case." It is to be noted from the minutes of the conferences in those days that certain funds, which are now handled separately, were then carried under one head. The missionary fund, or "the amounts necessary to make up the deficiencies of those who have not received their regular allowance on the Circuits," and "the amounts necessary for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers," were reported under one question, and in the distribution of the fund we note that a certain part was allotted "To the Bishops." At this conference the fund distributed amounted to \$1094.65, of which \$800 came from the Book Concern in New York. But as usual the Texans were not merely receivers of mission funds, but they were ready to lend their support to the general work of the Church. "The various benevolent enterprises of the Church also came before the Conference," says the Report of the Board of Missions, "and evidently excited a deep interest among the preachers.

Resolutions were passed in which the preachers pledged themselves to take up collections for the liquidation of our missionary debt, and to carry out, as far as possible, the 'cent-a-week system.' The anniversary of the Conference Missionary Society was held toward the close of the session, at which a most excellent spirit prevailed. As the people in Texas are almost entirely destitute of money, they were obliged on this occasion to evince their attachment to the missionary cause by the consecration of their property. One gentleman gave to the Society 500 acres of land situated near St. Marks [probably San Marcos]; and another the one-half of 150 acres near Ruttersville. One gave a cow and calf, others jewelry, etc., while a deep interest for the missionary enterprise seemed to pervade the whole assembly."

Before the adjournment of the conference the members repaired in a body to the "preaching room," where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered by Thomas O. Summers, after which Robert Alexander, the president, read the appointments. In these appears the new district of Lake Soda, covering the upper portion of eastern Texas, with Littleton Fowler presiding elder, and the new charges appearing for the first time were Shelbyville, Lamar Mission, Franklin, and Huntsville. Thirty-five preachers received appointments at this conference, among whom we find a number of new names, transfers to Texas. In fact there entered Texas that winter one of the largest and best known companies of recruits which our history has known, and these all from Ohio. Homer S. Thrall, one of them, says in his "History of Methodism in Texas":

There was still a demand for more preachers. To secure volunteers Mr. Fowler attended some of the Northern Conferences. Among others he visited the Ohio Conference, held by Bishop Morris in Hamilton, O., Sept. 28, 1842. Before Mr. Fowler arrived at Hamilton, H. S. Thrall, who had just been elected

to deacon's orders, had applied for a transfer to Texas. Dr. Ruter's letters, published in the *Advocate*, in New York, in 1837, had influenced Mr. Thrall to select Texas as the ultimate field of ministerial labor.

Mr. Fowler made a speech and called for volunteers for Texas. J. B. Finley and Z. Connell took a vacant seat in front of the speaker, as though they were ready to go. These venerable men were crowded off by some younger brethren, who persisted in taking their places. Something was said about the best route to Texas, when Daniel Poe arose and gave some valuable information. Mr. Poe had lost a brother, Major G. W. Poe, of the Texas army, in Texas, and had visited the Republic. Mr. Finley, the old chief, moved that the Conference send Mr. Poe to take charge of the boys. This was agreed to at once. Some one asked Mr. Poe if Mrs. Poe would be willing? He replied that the first time he saw his wife she was teaching among the Indians at the head of Lake Superior, and she would go wherever the authorities of the Church thought it best to send her husband. The Minutes of the Ohio Conference for that year show that Daniel Poe, Homer S. Thrall, John W. DeVilbiss, William O'Conner, Richard Walker, and Wilbur J. Thurbur were sent as missionaries to Texas. Mr. Poe called the Texans to meet in Cincinnati. They were here joined by Isaac M. Williams, from the North Ohio Conference.

We are told in another connection<sup>1</sup> that among those who arose at the Ohio Conference and started to take his seat among the volunteers for Texas was Randolph S. Foster, afterwards Bishop Foster, when a member of the conference sitting near him caught him by the coat-tail and pulled him back, saying, "Randolph, you have no business in Texas." Mr. Thrall in his "History" says that of this Ohio company of volunteers "Mr. Poe was the only one who reached Conference at Bostrop," but strange to say he records in certain "Reminiscences" that he himself reached Washington on the 17th of December, and that he arrived at Bastrop, the seat of the conference, on the 21st (two days before the conference

<sup>1</sup> Life of J. W. DeVilbiss, p. 13.



opened). "Here," he says, "I met Brothers Fowler and Poe, and I learned that the other brethren from Ohio would not be at the Conference, having entered Texas by the way of Red River." Thrall had taken passage on the first river packet out of Cincinnati for New Orleans, ahead of the rest of the company, thence he proceeded to Galveston and up to Houston, where he met David Ayers, who had brought his carriage to Houston expecting to meet Bishop Roberts. The bishop, as we have seen, did not come. Mr. Thrall accompanied Mr. Ayers to the interior, arriving at the Wade neighborhood on the Brazos on the first of December. He says he remained there a week, assisting Brother Robert Alexander at a quarterly meeting. The class there numbered over fifty members, and had been organized during the year. For want of money they paid the presiding elder in cattle, the stewards agreeing to send them up to his "rancho" in Austin County.

Fowler, Poe, DeVilbiss and the others shipped from Cincinnati on November 20. On reaching New Orleans it was reported that Galveston was blockaded by a Mexican fleet. This report induced the company to take a Red River packet, which, however, could get no higher up that stream than a point below Nachitoches, on account of low water. The party hired a wagon and team to transport the women and children and baggage across to Texas, and the men took it afoot. After crossing the Sabine it was agreed, on account of the nearness of the date of the conference and the scarcity of horses, that Fowler and Poe should go to conference, and the rest of the company would await the appointments and better means of transportation. In the meantime the preachers remaining behind were not idle, but united in holding a few protracted meetings in which they had several conversions.

In due time the appointments made at Bastrop reached them. Homer S. Thrall and John W. DeVilbiss

had been appointed to neighboring circuits, Thrall to Brazoria, and DeVilbiss as a colleague with Henderson D. Palmer on Egypt circuit. Thrall and DeVilbiss had been neighbors in Ohio, and were members of the same class. Thrall was a native of Vermont, where he was born in 1819, being, therefore, twenty-three years of age when he entered Texas. He was educated at Ohio Wesleyan University, and throughout his long career in Texas, covering more than fifty years, he manifested a literary turn of mind. He was admitted on trial at the Ohio Conference in 1840. DeVilbiss was a native of Maryland, and was of German extraction. He was of the same age as Thrall, though the latter is to outrun him by a few years in Texas. Taking up DeVilbiss's "Reminiscences" and obtaining an account of the hardships which he encountered in Texas, we wonder if he did not sometimes cherish the secret regret that some friend had not pulled him back "by his coat-tails," when he volunteered at the Ohio Conference. But DeVilbiss, as we shall discover, was a man of heroic spirit, deeply devoted to his calling, and able to display in the face of the worst difficulties a saving sense of humor and optimism. "I was now three hundred miles from my field of labor," he says, referring to his place of sojourn in eastern Texas when his appointment reached him, "and how to get there I did not know. Providence opened my way. Brother Sneed had bought a bunch of horses, and wished them taken to Washington county on the Brazos, and offered me one to ride provided I would assist in getting the others across the country. Could you have seen Brother Palmer and myself on this trip, you would not have taken us for Methodist preachers. Each had two horses tailed to the one he rode, and a few more followed of their own accord. We had a pleasant trip, and in due time delivered the stock safely to the owner, who had preceded us a week or ten days. Brother Sneed loaned me a horse to ride to my circuit and keep till

I could procure one of my own. The nearest point to our circuit was thirty-five miles, which we made in a day. We were now on the Colorado, two miles from Columbus, our initial appointment. We put up at a Mr. Wright's, and were informed that the Colorado was higher than ever known by the oldest citizen. Columbus was on the west side of the river, and the following Sabbath was the day for preaching. It was Friday night, and we saw no way of crossing the river unless we could construct a raft. Mr. Wright informed me that Mr. Beason had some dry willow logs which lay very near the water, and at a good place to launch a raft. In the morning early I went to see Mr. Beason, and without any difficulty got the logs. Armed with augur, saw, axe, hammer and nails, Brother Palmer and I went to work, and by 3 p.m. our raft was finished and launched, and appeared to be entirely seaworthy, though Brother Palmer and the bystanders thought otherwise. We would have to run down the river about two miles to make Columbus, and these gentlemen thought the eddies and flood-wood together would cause our raft to founder. Just as we were making our preparations to go aboard a messenger arrived, informing us that a Mr. Williams had been drowned that morning in attempting to cross a slough and requested Brother Palmer and myself to make a coffin for him. I confess this news rather dampened my confidence in the raft, and we abandoned the enterprise. We gathered some rough tools, found some rough planks, and by noon on Sunday finished the coffin. We buried our young friend, and that night I preached to a small congregation at Mr. Wright's, and Brother Palmer delivered a warm and appropriate exhortation."

The Egypt circuit embraced all the settlements in what are now Colorado, Lavaca, Jackson, Wharton and Matagorda counties. Within this territory there were sixteen appointments, and it required nearly four hundred miles of travel to get round the circuit. The nar-

rator adds: "During about three months of this year we had to travel at night, on account of the green-headed flies. If we attempted to cross the prairies in daylight, we did it at the risk of losing our horses." Other accounts of that day refer to this plague, which spread over all the lower country, and made life miserable to man and beast. During about half of this year Palmer was absent in eastern Texas, having been relieved to look after business matters, and DeVilbiss had the big circuit all to himself. In June a notable camp-meeting was held at Spanish Camp Springs, on Peach Creek, six miles below Egypt. The preachers present were John Clark, presiding elder; Chauncey Richardson, John W. Kenney, John Haynie, Homer S. Thrall, Wm. S. Hamilton, Isaac M. Williams and J. W. DeVilbiss. The church in these parts was greatly strengthened by this meeting, but it closed with both DeVilbiss and Haynie down with fever.

The following instance of early Methodist hymnology is recorded by DeVilbiss:

I had a week-day appointment at a private house on Old Caney. The first time I preached there, while the people were gathering, a pious old lady ventured to give us a voluntary hymn. She sang it to the tune of "Old Windham," in rather slow time, with a peculiar nasal twang. The hymn went on this wise:

A Methodist it is my name,  
 I hope to live and die the same,  
 And when I die I'll go to rest  
 And live among the Methodist.  
 The devil hates the Methodist  
 Because they sing and shout the best, etc.

At the close of the service I told the good sister that I did not like her hymn. "You don't," said she with emphasis; "Why, I think it is the best hymn in the book." I told her it was not in the book. Said she, "Yes, sir-ree, but it is"; and she drew from her pocket an old rusty little book and showed me the hymn. So I had to give it up.



One more reminiscence of this year we will give from this source. We have been pained to note that many of our preachers in those days were on certain occasions wholly wanting in dignity. Witness the journey of De-Vilbiss and Palmer to their circuit with that bunch of horses, already noted. Another instance where all dignity seems to have been cast to the winds—or to the waters, rather—is the following:

During this year Brother Thrall and myself met at a camp-meeting in Washington county, near where Chappell Hill now stands. He was then on the Brazoria circuit. At the close of this meeting we started for Egypt. We spent the first night at Rev. Robert Alexander's. Here we were told that Mill Creek, some eight miles on the way, was impassable. Brother Thrall said we would go and see. On the way we met a colored man, who told us that about 300 yards below the ford some person had cut a small tree across the stream; and, said the darkey, "if you is good at cooning you'll get over." We went and found the tree, which looked like a slim chance. Bro. Thrall said we would try it. I tied his saddle and saddle-bags on his back, and he cooned it safely over the stream. He then returned and fixed me up in like manner, and I made the trip safely. The next thing was to get the horses over. There was a bluff about ten feet high on the north side of the creek, while on the south side the bank was low. We concluded to lead our horses, one at a time, near this bluff and push them off into the water. Bro. Thrall then led Fox (my horse) up to the bluff, gave him a push, and off he went. He floundered considerably, and for a few moments I thought my horse was gone, but he finally made the shore all right. Bro. Thrall then led up Brazos, as he called him. He was a strong, well built pony, but he had no hair on his head or face. He looked in his face for all the world like an alligator. Bro Thrall pushed off Brazos, and he went to the bottom, and apparently the horse was gone; but in a few moments the alligator head appeared near me, and Br. Thrall shouted: "Oho, I have got a Campbellite." After Br. Thrall got over we ate our lunch and said our prayers, and Bro. Thrall proposed that we then and there enter into a



covenant never to take anybody's word for the condition of a stream, or any other difficulty or hindrance that might be in the way to an appointment, but to go and see. This resolution has been a great help to me in meeting my appointments. On many occasions, during my forty years ministry in Texas, I have had frequent reports of impassable streams, epidemics and other hindrances ahead, but have kept my covenant with Brother Thrall, and have gone and seen, and have made my way through.

The camp-meeting referred to above, held near where Chappell Hill came to be, marked the beginning of the rise of the church there, which was destined soon to become one of the most important appointments in Texas. Among the first settlers of that community were the families of Stevenson, Hubert, Chappell, Hargrove, Kesee, Reavill, King, and others, all Methodists. The great camp-meeting of 1843 commenced at Cedar Creek, the then name of the place, on October 19. There were eleven preachers present, among whom were Clark, presiding elder, Kenney, Richardson, Alexander, Haynie, Fisher, Whipple, DeVilbiss and Thrall. Nearly all the giants of that day were there, and of the preaching "we have never heard it excelled," says Thrall.

Some very important camp-meetings were also held in eastern Texas that year. Francis Wilson, presiding elder of the San Augustine district, held eight meetings in succession on one round of his district, as follows: near Crockett; at Wolf Creek, Polk County; Corn Street community, Jefferson County; Little Cow Creek, Newton County (near where Henry Stephenson had located and died); near San Augustine; at Milam; at the Box Camp-ground, on the Neches; and at Fort Houston, Anderson County. At the Milam camp-meeting there were eighty accessions to the church, a wonderful ingathering for those days.

Daniel Poe, as we have seen, succeeded in reaching the conference at Bastrop in December, 1842. An inci-

dent of his journey from conference to his first appointment makes a somewhat dampening and chilling experience for a new recruit. "As the Conference adjourned in the middle of the day," says Thrall, "a number of the preachers were enabled to start for their work, staying that night with families living on Hill's Prairie, fifteen miles below Bastrop. During the night a heavy rain fell. About 3 o'clock the next day the preachers reached the bank of Rabb's Creek, and found it ten feet deep and running with great rapidity. In spite of the remonstrances of the younger brethren, Brother Frank Wilson plunge in. His horse sunk, and horse and rider disappeared under water. Brother Wilson came to the surface, his head bleeding from a blow received from his horse. He and his horse finally reached the opposite shore safely. Mr. Sneed, who had navigated the swamps and bayous of Louisiana, was then selected to construct a raft. He did so. It was launched, and whirled rapidly down-stream. Those on it, among whom was the writer, were glad enough to get on *terra firma* on the same side we started from, thoroughly drenched with water. A council was called, and it was determined that we must wait until the creek had run down. Mr. Poe, however, declared that he would cross over and accompany Mr. Wilson. In crossing Mr. Poe was thrown from his horse, and had to swim ashore. The horse did the same, but lost saddle and boots and Mr. Poe's outer clothing that had been tied to the saddle. It was now drawing near sundown, and Mr. Poe had to ride bareback in nothing but underclothing, ten miles to Ruterville. As for the rest they concluded to camp for the night at an empty cabin Mr. Sneed had found a little off from the road. Mr. Hord rode to Rabb's Prairie and got a bushel of sweet potatoes to roast. Mr. Fisher improvised a prayer meeting, assisted by Messrs. Fowler, Johnson, Lewis, Palmer and Shook. When they bivouacked for the night upon their blankets, the winds, sighing amid the grand old pines on

the bank of Rabb's Creek, lulled to sleep men who have left a profound impression upon society in Texas."

Daniel Poe proceeded to his appointment, the Lake Soda mission, in the Lake Soda district, Littleton Fowler, presiding elder. Poe had brought a wife and three children to Texas, a wife well adapted to a wilderness career, and who had the pioneering spirit akin to that of her husband. Poe early became impressed with the lack of schools and teachers in Texas, and this lack was more forcibly brought home to him by the prospect of rearing his own children here. He determined during the year to take steps to improve these conditions. After consulting Fowler, who heartily seconded him, he returned to Ohio and spent several months within the bounds of his old conference recruiting a corps of teachers for Texas. Having, after a few months, accomplished the object of his visit to Ohio, he returned to Texas, and shortly after commenced laying the foundations of an institution of learning at San Augustine. The next conference resolved to adopt it and give it their patronage. This was the beginning of "Wesleyan College," of which more anon.

We have to record that Wm. O'Conner, one of the band of volunteers from Ohio, did not live out his first year in Texas. He died in 1843, while serving the Harrison circuit, in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He was a native of New Jersey, but the family removed early to Ohio. He entered the Ohio Conference with Thrall, DeVilbiss and others in 1840. O'Conner left a young wife in Ohio, who expected to follow him to the new country at a later day. They never met again. The young preacher was buried where he fell.

The conference of 1843 was held in the Robinson settlement, the old established Methodist stronghold a few miles below the present town of Huntsville. The church which had been erected here bore, according to the conference minutes, the classic name of "Trinity

Church," deriving the name perhaps more from geographical than theological influence. The church was "a spacious building, constructed of hewn pine logs, the first of its kind perhaps in all that region," says O. M. Addison, who was later pastor on the circuit. "Though somewhat rude in appearance, compared with the present style of city churches, it was creditable to the community, and comported well with the condition of the people and the country."<sup>2</sup>

Bishop James O. Andrew was present and presided at this conference. Bishop Andrew found in Houston that "they have a Catholic Church, and also a house of worship for Presbyterians. The Methodists have a very neat brick chapel nearly finished, for which we are mainly indebted to the indefatigable labors of Brother Summers, and the liberality of our friends in the States. The Episcopalians have a minister . . . but the Presbyterians are without a pastor. Of the Methodist society I ought to speak more particularly; but can only say that they are not numerous, and there is but little of this world's wealth among them. They have, however, some pious spirits, and it is confidently hoped, when they get their church finished, and have a minister stately among them, that they will experience enlarged prosperity. Beyond all doubt there is great need for a deep, a thorough, a sweeping revival of religion in Houston, for in addition to the usual evil influences exerted against what is holy, they have here more of infidelity, subtle, organized and boldly blasphemous than I have met in any place of its size in all my journeyings."<sup>3</sup>

The season was described as "the wettest ever known in Texas," and the bishop and preachers had to make their way to the seat of the conference through seas of water and mud. One preacher reported that in getting

<sup>2</sup> This church was later displaced by a better one, known as "Martha Chapel." The old building was removed to the home of Wm. Robinson where it served the uses of a barn.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew's Miscellany, p. 88.



ninety miles he had to travel two hundred, swimming numerous creeks and traversing boggy prairies without a road, the extra travel being to head impassable streams. Other preachers reported that they had to ferry two miles and a half in crossing the Brazos, and others five miles in crossing the Trinity. Bishop Andrew and his company from Houston, consisting of Messrs. Summers and Shearn, reached the conference after a horseback ride of eighty-five miles, without having to swim any of that distance. The conference opened on December 13. Thomas O. Summers was for the fourth time elected secretary. Owing to the loss of all the early conference records, we again turn to the Annual Report of the Board of Missions for our information:

Two preachers were received by transfer, and eight on trial; three were discontinued, one received a supernumery and one a superannuated relation. The number of preachers now in Texas is forty, being an increase of four over that of last year. The number in society, as reported at conference, are, whites, 4,114; colored, 856; local preachers 55; making an increase over last year of 952 whites, 320 colored, and 15 local preachers—the net increase being 1,287.

Increased attention has also been directed to the Sabbath School cause, and notwithstanding the peculiar difficulties of their establishment in a new country, whose population is so widely scattered, twenty schools have been organized and reported to the Conference. Connected with these schools there are 28 superintendents, 98 teachers, and 629 scholars; also three Bible classes and 1,248 volumes in their libraries. . . .

The Rutgersville College, incorporated by congress, has suffered much from its direct exposure to the border warfare which has been carried on in that region. Every rumor of an invasion must necessarily affect the operations of such a school. This interruption, however, to its prosperity, must be temporary only, and the college is destined to be an honor and a blessing to the infant republic.

At the late session of the Conference, another chartered literary institution was taken under its fostering care. It is called



the "Wesleyan College," and is located at San Augustine, Eastern Texas. It has a male and female department, and is reported as being already in a flourishing condition. The Board cannot but observe, with gratitude, these noble efforts to provide with the blessed gospel the means of imparting sound religious and literary instruction among the inhabitants of that growing community.

The zeal of the church in Texas to advance the cause of missions is worthy of special commendation. As an evidence of this, we take great pleasure in recording the fact, that the amount assigned to the Conference for liquidating the debt of our Missionary Society, was all secured at its last session referring to the session of 1843. One or two preachers, with a wife and children, who received only \$50 on their circuits, and a part of this sum in cows and calves, paid at the Conference \$30 in cash for missions. At their Conference anniversary the same holy spirit of liberality prevailed; some retaining scarcely enough money to pay their expenses home.

The preachers admitted on trial at this conference were: William H. Hamilton, Wm. K. Wilson, Francis M. Stovall, James W. Baldrige, Chas. H. Wright, Isaac Tabor, James M. Wesson, Milton H. Jones. The two transfers into the conference were Orin Hatch and Lester James, the latter appointed to the head of the new Wesleyan College at San Augustine. The conference suffered a great loss at this session by the transfer of Thomas O. Summers, who went to the Alabama Conference, but he was very soon to become a servant of the Church at large.

As the following year was to be a General Conference year, the first delegates from Texas to a General Conference were chosen at this session. These were John Clark and Littleton Fowler. The slavery question, which in the older sections of the Church was now being crowded to the front, was not so acute in Texas, and it could not be seen that a division of the Church was possible; least of all was it suspected that the Bishop now presiding

over the Texas Conference would, within a few months, prove to be the rock on which the Church should split. If coming events had cast a shadow so far away as Texas it is certain that the Texas preachers, a majority of whom were Southern in birth and sympathies, would not have chosen to represent them in General Conference a man of the traditions and sentiments of John Clark. In view of the events of 1844, to be noticed in the next chapter, an interesting reminiscence of this conference of 1843 is here added, bringing into relief two men who are soon to stand in quite different relations from that shown here. The sketch is by W. P. Zuber,<sup>4</sup> and is as follows:

The Conference of 1843 was held in Robinson's settlement, about eight miles south of Huntsville. This was a prosperous settlement, located on a hill in the piney woods. At least one-third of the adult settlers were Methodists, and a majority subscribed to the Methodist doctrines. There were two houses of hewn pine logs, one a school house and the other a church, each 30 by 40 feet, and located about fifty yards distant from each other. Each had a door in the south end, windows without glass in east and west sides. The school house had two writing shelves, one on each side running full length. The church had a large tall pulpit in the north end. The seats in both houses were benches of hewn timber, very hard, but quite smooth, with strong supports. The Conference assembled on Thursday and adjourned on Monday morning. The Conference meetings were held in the school house, and preaching and missionary meetings were held in the church. All the preachers and visitors were entertained in the farmer's homes. I attended, from beginning to close, and I am the only adult survivor. Bishop Andrew was very affable and courteous, yet his plainness of speech often made him blunt. What I remember as singular was his special courtesy toward Clark. This Mr. Clark had a strong but melodious voice, and was a fine singer. The bishop usually called upon him to lead the singing and they usually walked arm in arm to and from the Conference. On the morning of the appointments several

<sup>4</sup> From a scrap-book clipping from T. C. A.; date not given.

ladies and gentlemen came from Huntsville. The reading was in the school house, and just before the secretary commenced reading them, Clark announced that many ladies waited outside, and requested all men except preachers to leave and give room. Many preachers moved and seated themselves on the writing shelves along the sides, and I took a seat there. But the officious Clark imperiously ordered me to leave and give room for the ladies. To avoid becoming a cause of confusion, I left the house. After adjournment I mounted my horse, but R. Alexander told me to wait, that the bishop was going to my house. I sat on my horse several minutes looking at the preachers, many assembled and bidding each other farewell and sending word, some of horseback and some on foot. Soon the bishop rode around and called Summers, and he soon rode around, and these and two other brethren rode away with me. We took a course to avoid high water. About sunset we arrived at my father's house, about three-fourths of a mile below the present hamlet of Shiro, Grimes county. After supper and prayers Summers presented the minutes to the bishop to sign. They had been written on loose leaf sheets, and the bishop refused to sign them, saying he would not sign them until they were transcribed in a book. Summers had no book, but the bishop was prepared, and furnished him a book, and told him this would be his only opportunity to transcribe them, and the bishop retired to bed. Summers sat up until 1 o'clock to finish the job, and Brother Johnson, a local preacher, and I sat up with him and snuffed his candle. Next morning we had breakfast by candle light; the bishop signed the minutes, and they were off to Houston.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AND OTHER EVENTS OF 1844

THERE was a general feeling of an impending crisis on the slavery question as the delegates assembled in the City of New York for the General Conference early in the month of May, 1844. Bishop Andrew had written just a year before: "The state of the church, too, afflicts me. The abolition excitement, I fear, has never presented an aspect so threatening to the union of the Church as it does at this moment. . . . I look forward to the next General Conference with no little apprehension. . . . The policy of a majority of the General Conference on this subject, I think, is fully settled, and I greatly doubt whether the South will longer submit to this avowed proscription."<sup>1</sup> But the state of feeling in the North was mild in 1843 compared to that existing in 1844. The more radical anti-slavery element had left the Church in 1843 and set up the Wesleyan Methodist Connection; but still there was no sense of settled peace, and a new source of irritation had arisen. In January, 1844, after Bishop Andrew had closed his round of conferences, including the one in Texas, he entered into his second marriage relation, this time with a widow in Georgia who owned a family of slaves.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Andrew had been the legal owner of slaves before. In one instance a mulatto girl had been bequeathed to him by an old lady, to be held in trust until she was nineteen years of age, when

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Bishop Soule, in *Life of Andrew*, by G. G. Smith, p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> "Fourteen or fifteen," as stated in debates of General Conference. *Debates of G. C. of 1844*, p. 200.

she was to be sent to Liberia. When she arrived at that age the girl refused to go, and remained with him, legally his slave. In another instance the mother of Bishop Andrew's first wife had left to her a negro boy, who, upon her death without will, had legally fallen to her husband. In both instances his connection with slavery was involuntary, and the laws of his state would not permit of their emancipation. But it was the relation entered into in 1844 that brought upon the Bishop the censure of his brethren at the North. This was, in their view, a voluntary act of becoming a slave-holder, while occupying the high office of a general superintendent of the Church, and when sentiment throughout a large section of the Church had become settled that slavery was an unmixed evil.

When Bishop Andrew reached the seat of the Conference and became apprised of the feeling against him, he immediately resolved to resign his office. But he was dissuaded from this course by the action taken at a meeting of all the delegates from the slave-holding states, when it was resolved that "We unanimously concur in requesting the Bishop, by all his love for the unity of the Church, which his resignation will certainly jeopardize, not to allow himself for any consideration to resign."

Early in the sessions of the Conference a case from the Baltimore Conference came up on appeal. A member of that conference, named Harding, had married a woman who owned slaves. His conference had suspended him "until he gives assurance that he has taken the necessary steps to secure their freedom." The General Conference sustained the action of the Baltimore Conference, by an overwhelming majority. This was a forecast of what might be expected when the graver case of a slave-holding bishop should come up. On May 20 the question relating to Bishop Andrew's case reached the floor, in the presentation and adoption of a resolution of inquiry concerning his connection with slavery. In



response to this inquiry Bishop Andrew submitted a statement to a committee of the General Conference, containing the facts as noted above.<sup>3</sup> Upon the receipt of this statement a resolution was offered requesting Bishop Andrew to resign. On the following day the historic "Finley Substitute" was offered, which was as follows:

Whereas, the Discipline of our church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency, and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which in the estimation of the General Conference will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains.

This resolution was debated upon the floor of the Conference for ten days, when on June 1 it was adopted by a vote of 110 to 68. On the second day following this action a resolution that "it is the sense of this General Conference that the vote in the case of Bishop Andrew

<sup>3</sup> "It was true, then, that one of the bishops of the church had become a slave-holder, though certainly under very peculiar circumstances. Nevertheless, it was a tremendous matter. The personal character of Bishop James O. Andrew was above reproach and above suspicion. During all those terrible ten days when the searching gaze of the General Conference, of the whole church, and, indeed, of the whole nation, was focussed upon him; amid the feverish excitement of that high debate, no railing accusation was brought against him. One who reads his biography will find that his private life was one of exceptional character. . . . But that Bishop Andrew should, in view of the history and exciting agitation of the slavery question in his church, have allowed himself to become connected with slaveholding *after* he was made a bishop in that church seems not merely 'an indiscretion,' but a very grave and grievous error. . . . If Bishop Andrew did not know the history of the slavery agitation in the church and country, and the attitude of the two sections well enough to have reason for fearing that his marrying a slave-owner would occasion serious trouble, then his ignorance, for a man in his position, was inexcusable. If he did know these things and was indifferent to them, his indifference was more inexcusable. In any case, his position in 1844 was not one to be envied."—A History of The Methodist Church, South, by Gross Alexander, D.D., pp. 19, 20.

be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate," and that final disposition of the case be postponed until the General Conference of 1848, was laid on the table. The last action taken in Bishop Andrew's case was the adoption of a resolution, in response to inquiries of the bishops, that "Bishop Andrew's name stand in the Minutes, Hymn-Book and Discipline as formerly"; that "the rule in relation to the support of a bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew"; and that "Whether in any, and if any, in what work Bishop Andrew be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action in relation to the previous action of this Conference in his case."<sup>4</sup>

It is not our purpose, nor does it lie within our province, to go into this historic case more at length, nor to dwell upon the causes which here in 1844 divided the Church. The above facts have been set out with a view of showing the reaction in Texas of certain aspects of the case. It should be observed, however, in dismissing the Andrew case, that while it was undoubtedly true that Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery was the occasion for the division, yet division was sooner or later inevitable from an ever-widening divergence of sentiment on slavery North and South. But Bishop Andrew is dead, and all that generation, and slavery has been abolished, and there is no division of opinion on the evil of that institution. The fact that the gulf between the two branches of Methodism, opened in 1844, remains unclosed, is not due so much to "harking back to ancient history," as to fundamental differences of views on Church law, or the relative powers of the episcopacy and the General Conference, differences which exist quite as much to-day as they did when the case of Bishop Andrew first brought them to the surface.

The delegates from Texas to the General Conference of 1844, J. Clark and L. Fowler, are both shown to have

<sup>4</sup> Journal G. C., p. 118.

been present in the preliminary meeting of Southern delegates which requested Bishop Andrew not to resign, and as it appears that the action taken was unanimous, they both evidently voted for the resolution. But on most other aspects of the case when it came up in the Conference, including the Harding appeal case from the Baltimore Conference, J. Clark voted with the Northern majority, while Fowler appears voting uniformly with the Southern delegates. On the Finley substitute resolution "during the call for yeas and nays J. Clark asked to be excused from voting, as he was compelled, by the want of health in some members of his family, to remove from Texas. Conference by a vote declined from excusing him."<sup>5</sup> Whereupon J. Clark voted "Yea." To the Declaration of the southern delegates, and to the Protest—following the action on the Andrew case and both preliminary steps to the division—Clark's name does not appear, but Fowler signed both of these documents. Clark, who had been stationed at Galveston in 1844, had disposed of his effects prior to the meeting of the General Conference and took his family with him to New York. At the close of the General Conference he transferred to the Troy (New York) Conference, and never returned to Texas.<sup>6</sup>

The action of the General Conference in Bishop Andrew's case became a subject of general debate in the Church press, North and South, and floods of resolutions and impassioned oratory were turned loose in annual conferences and even in many erstwhile quiet quarterly conferences. In Texas the course of one of her delegates in voting with the North was strongly resented, and his immediate transfer and failure to return added to the odium attaching to his action. An example of the man-

<sup>5</sup> Journal G. C., p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> He subsequently was transferred to the West, and was filling a station in Chicago when he died in 1853. During his pastorate in Chicago he induced a Mrs. Garrett, the wealthy widow of a former mayor of that city, to give property valued at \$300,000 toward the founding of "Garrett Biblical Institute."

ner in which many of the quarterly conferences expressed themselves is the following:

Whereas, at the third quarterly meeting Conference for Washington Circuit, Texas, held at Wesley Chapel on the third day of August, 1844, it was represented to said Conference, that one of our delegates to the General Conference, the Rev. John Clark, had manifestly abused the trust and confidence reposed in him as a delegate to said General Conference, and had even opposed the interests of that portion of the Church which he then represented:

Whereupon, on motion, the chair appointed the following named persons, to wit: John W. Kenney, J. D. Giddings and Enoch King, a committee to draft a preamble and resolutions expressive of the sense of this Conference, in relation to the conduct of our said delegate therein:

Whereupon, said committee reported the following, to-wit, which were unanimously adopted—

Then follows a lengthy preamble of three sections, and a set of eleven resolutions. The action of the General Conference in Bishop Andrew's case is denounced as "the iron tread of a monopolizing Northern majority, trampling under foot common right and common justice, in thus personally attacking our Bishop, and suspending him for no other cause than the gratification of the rabid appetite, the wild phrenzy, and infatuation of the prevailing epidemic of modern abolitionism." Among the resolutions pertaining to Clark's case are the following:

Resolved, That the intercourse of the Rev. John Clark, was so intimate and extensive with the preachers and people of Texas, that it was impossible for him to be mistaken in relation to their sentiments and feelings upon the all absorbing subject of slavery; and he evidently must have foreseen that questions involving the rights of the South, upon that subject, would become matter of discussion and action before that body.

Resolved, That it is with heartfelt fear and regret that we are obliged to record, that contrary to the known wishes of those whom he had engaged to represent, and in the very face of his obligation, he applied the fratricidal knife to that portion of



the Church that had confided her interests to his care. . . . And while we cannot expect to reach him in his retreat to a clime more congenial to his feelings than ours, yet we would deter others from a similar course who hereafter offer to represent us in a like capacity.

By the same resolutions the thanks of the conference were extended to Fowler; the ensuing Texas Conference was requested to take action in the matter; copies of the resolutions were to be sent to Clark and to Fowler, and publication requested in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* and the *National Vindicator*.

Similar resolutions are found in the minutes of the fourth quarterly conference of the Montgomery circuit, except that Clark's course is characterized by even stronger language. In this paper he is placed in the same class with Judas Iscariot; but before the long and solemn indictment ends he is in a measure forgiven, and told to "Go Clark & sin no more." The resolutions of the Washington circuit were sent by the pastor, R. B. Wells, to the *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, at Nashville, and were published in full. Resolutions were also adopted at the next session of the annual conference, and these were published. The published resolutions from Texas drew a reply from Clark, which elicited a reply from Wells, and a desultory controversy between them ran in the Church press until 1846, with no other result than came from numerous other debates which were carried on across the ever-widening chasm between the North and the South.<sup>7</sup>

One is likely to remember the General Conference of 1844 as being wholly absorbed in the overshadowing issue of slavery, but this body found time, by prolonging its sessions, to give the usual attention to other Church interests. The Texas Conference was divided into two conferences, to be named respectively the Texas and the

<sup>7</sup> The resolutions and the entire correspondence between Clark and Wells are presented in an article entitled "The Clark-Wells Controversy," by the Rev. E. L. Shettles, in the *Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly*, January, 1910.



East Texas Conference, with the Trinity River as the boundary line between them. All of that portion of the Arkansas Conference lying in Texas, known as the "Sulphur Fork" country, was henceforth to be embraced in the East Texas Conference. A resolution introduced by L. Fowler was adopted by the General Conference advising that "all the preachers in Texas, both East and West, meet together in Conference at their next session, in order the more effectively to form their plans for their future action in both divisions of the work." Two bishops were elected—Leonidas L. Hamline and Edmund S. Janes, both from the North; but the latter owed his election to the votes of Southern delegates. Bishop Janes was designated to hold the conference in Texas.

The Texas preachers assembled for the last time as one body in San Augustine on January 8, 1845, with Bishop Janes in charge. Chauncey Richardson was elected secretary. It was really two annual conferences meeting as one body, as separate minutes were kept for the two sections. Wm. G. Booker and L. D. Bragg were admitted on trial into the Texas Conference, and L. S. Friend, Silas W. Camp, Andrew Davis, Enoch P. Chisholm and Daniel Shook into the East Texas Conference. John W. Kenney and John Haynie dropped back into the local ranks, and Orceneth Fisher was granted the superannuate relation. Mordecai and Pleasant M. Yell, John S. Williams and Robert Guthrie, all from the Memphis Conference, were received by transfer into the Texas Conference, and David L. Bell and Jefferson Shook from the Arkansas Conference, and John W. Fields from Kentucky entered the East Texas Conference. The membership statistics were as follows:

	White	Colored
Texas .....	1,627	517
East Texas .....	3,450	488
Total .....	5,077	1,055

Of the East Texas membership, the new accession of the Red River district from the Arkansas Conference contributed 700. There were 65 local preachers, making a total of 6154 members, all classes and colors. Increase over past year, 1129.

There was one figure missing from this conference who, within only a few months had come to be greatly beloved by his Texas brethren. This was Daniel Poe, who together with his faithful wife, had gone to his reward in July, 1844. Poe was born in Columbiana County, Ohio, October 12, 1809, and was cut down, therefore, in his thirty-first year. He was converted and united with the Methodist Church in his sixteenth year, and immediately he was appointed a class-leader and licensed to exhort. He attended an academy in Ohio, and later spent some time at Augusta College, Kentucky. In 1832 he was licensed to preach, and soon thereafter was admitted on trial into the Ohio Conference. In May, 1836, he was sent by Bishop Soule as a missionary to the Indians in Wisconsin, the mission then being in charge of John Clark. Poe's missionary career among the Indians was attended with such success, and he displayed such a spirit of heroism in meeting the conditions of that far western and undeveloped country, as to give him a place in Finley's "Sketches of Western Methodism." Associated with him in this work was Miss Jane West Ingram, formerly a teacher of Pontiac, Mich. In June, 1837, these fellow-workers were united in marriage. As before noticed, Poe had lost a brother in the war of the Texas revolution, and he had visited Texas soon thereafter to look after his deceased brother's affairs. This led to his being suggested as a guide for the company of Ohio preachers who volunteered for Texas in the fall of 1842. Poe was asked if his wife, who was not present, would consent to go to Texas. He assured the conference that he had no fears on that score, saying, "The first time I ever saw her she was among the Brothertown

Indians alone, teaching the children in the wigwams," and that she would go wherever the conference thought best to send him. Accordingly we find Poe and his wife, with three children—the youngest but a few weeks old—settled in Texas before the close of the year. Poe served in the Lake Soda district during 1843, but having manifested considerable interest in the improvement of educational conditions in eastern Texas, and having aided in launching the new college at San Augustine, he was appointed to the San Augustine circuit in 1844. Here he served as a sort of local financial agent of the institution, and the teacher of mathematics having resigned early in the year, Poe engaged to fill that place, though the demands of his circuit required extensive traveling and preaching five times a week. In the latter part of June, 1844, his wife was attacked with fever, but after a few days, appearing to be better, Poe left to fill an appointment on his circuit. After preaching Poe was himself taken violently ill. He was the next day conveyed to his home in San Augustine, and found that his wife had relapsed, and that his three children were prostrate with fever. "On Tuesday evening the doctor felt constrained to tell him that his wife was past all hope of recovery. They were unable to see each other, as they occupied separate chambers; but he sent an affectionate message to her, begging her to commend her soul and her children to God. . . . His disease now made rapid progress, and on Wednesday morning it was told him that his own case was hopeless. He immediately commenced giving some directions in respect to his worldly affairs; but his mind soon began to wander, so that he was unable to proceed. The next morning the Rev. Mr. Fowler, who had been with him before, called again to see him, and found him actually making the passage through the dark valley. He took him by the hand and said, 'Daniel, you are going.' He answered in a whisper, 'Yes.' 'And how do you feel?' said Mr. Fowler.

He replied, 'Happy, very happy,' and expired. His wife, in the immediate prospect of her departure, had her three children brought to her, commended them to God in a few words of prayer, gave each of them her last kiss, and requested the friends who stood around her bedside to take care of them until their uncle should come to take them away. Though she was one of the most affectionate of mothers, she gave them up without a chill of distrust, and then shouted 'Glory' till her voice sunk to a whisper, and she, too, was gone. They died within forty minutes of each other, and were buried in the same coffin, immediately in the rear of the Methodist Church in San Augustine."<sup>s</sup> Agreeable to his brother's dying request the Rev. Adam Poe came to Texas in December, 1844, wound up his deceased brother's affairs, and gathered up the three children, who had fully recovered from their illness, and had been taken in charge by different friends, and after a farewell visit to the grave of their father and mother, where "the scene was one of most melting that can be imagined," the children and brother left their dead as a precious memory to Texas Methodism.

We give the appointments for the Texas and the East Texas Conferences for the year 1845, that the reader may be informed of the new conference relations of the preachers who have hitherto belonged to one body. It will be noted that in the East Texas Conference the Sabine district largely supplants the former Lake Soda district, and the new Clarksville district appears. In the Texas Conference the new Washington district appears, covering the upper portion of the old Galveston district. We have come to a period when a great many new names occur in the appointments, too many to introduce one by one as they appear; and except in a few instances we will leave biographical notices to appear in connection with the death of their subjects.

<sup>s</sup> Findley's "Sketches."

The appointments were as follows:

East Texas Conference—

San Augustine District, F. Wilson, P. E.  
San Augustine, J. W. Fields, J. T. P. Irvine.  
Jasper, Jacob Crawford, H. Z. Adams.  
Jefferson, James W. Baldrige.  
Liberty, L. S. Friend.  
Trinity, Isaac Tabor.  
Crockett, M. H. Jones, Wm. K. Wilson.  
Wesley College, L. Janes, N. W. Burks.

Sabine District, L. Fowler, P. E.  
Nacogdoches, John C. Woolam, Silas W. Camp.  
Rusk, Henderson D. Palmer.  
Henderson, Wm. Craig.  
Shelbyville, Orin Hatch.  
Marshall, S. A. Williams, F. M. Stovall.  
Harrison, to be supplied.

Clarksville District, Daniel Payne, P. E.  
Clarksville, N. Shook.  
DeKalb, E. P. Chisholm.  
Paris, Jeff Shook, Andrew Davis.  
Fannin, Daniel Shook.  
Lake Soda, P. W. Hobbs, Robert Crawford.

Texas Conference—

Galveston District, R. Alexander, P. E.  
Galveston, I. M. Williams.  
Houston, J. W. Whipple.  
Brazoria, D. N. V. Sullivan, W. S. Hamilton.  
Brazos, James M. Wesson.  
San Jacinto, W. G. Booker.

Washington District, M. Yell, P. E.  
Washington, R. B. Wells, L. D. Bragg.  
Montgomery, James G. Johnson.  
Huntsville, Wm. C. Lewis.  
Franklin, James H. Collard.  
Nashville, Pleasant M. Yell.



Rutersville District, C. Richardson, P. E.

Rutersville, H. S. Thrall.

Bastrop, John S. Williams.

Columbus, Robert Guthrie.

Egypt, Daniel Carl, Jesse Hord.

Victoria, David L. Bell.

Gonzales, John W. DeVilbiss.

Rutersville College, C. Richardson, President; H. S. Thrall, Professor.

In glancing over the above list it will be noted that our young friend, Andrew Davis, whom we left a few chapters back, now appears among the prophets, and goes on his first appointment to the region near where he spent most of his childhood. It will be noted also in connection with Rutersville that Chauncey Richardson fills two places, which he had done also the year before; and H. S. Thrall is also to do double work. Rutersville College is now to become the separate charge of the Texas Conference, while Wesley College at San Augustine is to occupy the same relation to the East Texas Conference for a short time. The name of J. P. Sneed does not appear in the appointments this year, and there is no recorded disposition of his case otherwise. Sneed had returned to Tennessee to get married, and being absent at the time of conference, and there being no report from him, he was simply left "without an appointment."

Returning to note the course of general Church affairs, the delegates from the slave-holding states at the General Conference of 1844 had met together, before leaving the seat of the Conference, and after consultation had issued an address to the Southern conferences, which included a call to send instructed representatives to meet in a convention at Louisville, Ky., in May, 1845. All the Southern conferences responded by adopting resolutions and electing delegates to the convention. The Texas Conference, at the session reported above, elected Robert Alexander and Littleton Fowler as its represen-

tatives to the convention, and resolutions were adopted instructing these delegates, from which the following is taken :

The delegates were—To endeavor to secure a compromise between the North and the South—to oppose a formal division of the Church before the General Conference of 1848, or a general convention can be convened to decide the present controversy. But should a division be deemed unavoidable, and be determined on by the convention, then, being well satisfied with the discipline of the Church, as it is, we instruct our delegates not to support or favor any change in said discipline, by said convention, other than to adapt its fiscal economy to the Southern organization. . . .

That we appoint the Friday immediately preceding the meeting of the proposed General Convention of the delegates of the Southern and Southwestern Conferences as a day of fasting and prayer for the blessings of Almighty God on said Convention—that it may be favored with the helpful influence of His grace, and the guidance of His wisdom.

At the convention held at Louisville, May 1–19, 1845, it was determined that a separate ecclesiastical organization was necessary, and a General Conference was provided for, to be held in Petersburg, Va., in May, 1846. The bond, therefore, is formally and finally broken, and henceforth Texas Methodism, as originally constituted in 1840, is to be a part of the “Methodist Episcopal Church, South.”

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE YEAR 1845-1846

IT was in 1844 that the first Methodist preaching occurred in or near two of the future metropolitan centers of the state—San Antonio and Dallas. In March of that year the first Methodist preacher visited Dallas County, near the present locality of Dallas, and in April of the same year a Methodist circuit rider first visited and preached in San Antonio. The latter was already an old town, having sprung into existence as far back as 1718 as a Spanish frontier post and a center of early Catholic missionary operations. In 1840 its population was estimated at 3000, mostly Mexican or Spanish, with a sprinkling of Anglo-Americans and other nationalities. There was a vast stretch of country between the settlements in Texas and San Antonio, as well as between San Antonio and the Mexican border.

In 1844 John W. DeVilbiss was on the Victoria circuit, which included all the settlements on the Guadeloupe River, and as far down as Port Lavaca, on the bay. He made a reconnoitering visit to San Antonio this year, the following account of which he records in his "Reminiscences":

In April of this year (1844), in company with Rev. John McCullough of the Presbyterian Church, I made my first visit to the ancient city of San Antonio. We started at Victoria, and travelled up the Guadeloupe river to Seguin. At this place we procured an escort of Captain Hay's Texas Rangers. . . . We put up at a hotel kept by Anton Lockmar, an Italian, situated on Soledad street, not far from the convent. It was the

outside house in the direction of San Pedro Springs. We took a general look about the city, visiting San Pedro Springs, and the missions below the city. We notified the English-speaking people that we would have preaching on the Sabbath. We met at the county clerk's office on Commerce street. . . . The old building has long since been torn down to give place to a better one. About fifteen persons attended the services. I tried to preach from 1 Tim. iv: 8, and had a good degree of liberty. Rev. Mr. McCullough closed with a very appropriate prayer. On Monday we visited the mill, eight miles below the city, and called at the ranger's camp on the way. At the mill we found Messrs. Kerr & Higginbotham, builders and proprietors of this mill, doing a good business, sawing lumber and grinding corn. The people from Seguin and below on the Guadalupe had their grinding done here. Mr. Kerr was a strict member of our church, and with his wife and sister-in-law, Miss Martha Ann Higginbotham, were the only members in all that region. Mr. McCullough and I left on Tuesday for Seguin, where we parted, but to meet again in this same city of San Antonio.

At the next conference the Victoria circuit was divided, the upper portion being called Gonzales circuit, with DeVilbiss the preacher in charge for 1845. On his return from conference he was married at Egypt to Miss Talitha Ann Menefee, of a well-known Methodist family of that place, this occurring in February, 1845, Jesse Hord officiating. DeVilbiss decided to locate at Seguin as the headquarters of his new circuit, and here he built his own log cabin for a parsonage. Soon after moving in he and his wife made a visit to San Antonio, which he made a regular appointment on his circuit for the remainder of the year, though no organization was effected until the following year. On this second visit to the old city DeVilbiss preached in the parlor of the same hotel where he had been entertained on his visit the year before. He says:

The hotel was kept by Messrs. Krump & Lockmar, the latter the same gentleman who was mine host on my first visit to the

city. Mr. Lockmar fixed up the room in a very neat and proper manner for divine service, with a clean white cloth on the table, a pitcher of water, and comfortable seats for the audience. He also placed on the table a bottle of port wine. I told him I would rather he would remove the wine. He contended that it would greatly assist me in speaking, and that the priests in Italy would not preach at all without some good wine to assist them, and added with emphasis: "This is a first-rate article." I told him that Americans did not approve of such things, so the wine was taken away. Mr. Lockmar was a model of hospitality and politeness. I was kindly entertained free of charge by Messrs. Krump & Lockmar at every visit, and had good congregations once a month during the year.

At the ensuing conference, held at Houston early in 1846, which we have yet to notice, DeVilbiss was returned to the Gonzales circuit. He found upon his return to Seguin that a little surveying had been done and he had been surveyed out of his cabin, the new owner refusing to pay or to treat on the matter at all. DeVilbiss then took up headquarters at San Antonio, locating in the only vacant house he could find some distance below the city, near the Kerr & Higginbotham mill. Here, in order to supplement his living, he taught a small school in his house. He had some difficulty in securing a permanent place for preaching services in San Antonio, but finally secured the use of the court house, situated on the main plaza. He relates that he procured lumber from the mill below the city, and with his own hands made the seats and a pulpit. "Here we began a small Sunday school which constantly increased in interest," he says. "Some of the members of that Sunday school are now prominent citizens of San Antonio."<sup>1</sup> We had one great annoyance. Just at the hour of preaching a large crowd would assemble in the same plaza and engage in a chicken fighting. The noise of this iniquitous assembly greatly disturbed our worship. I am sorry to say that the leaders

<sup>1</sup> This was written in the early eighties.



in the affair were Americans." During the year his old friend McCullough moved to the city, and they made an arrangement by which each should preach on alternate Sundays. On the intervening Sundays DeVilbiss preached in the Kerr mill neighborhood, where he continued to make his home. Following the same record we are told:

In June of this year 1846 I organized a class. So far as I am able to recollect it consisted of the following members: Mr. Wm. P. Kerr and wife, Miss Ann Higginbotham, Mrs. Tabitha Ann DeVilbiss (the pastor's wife), Mr. M. G. Cotton and wife, and Gustavus Ely, and Martha Lucinda Kerr, who joined on probation. Not long after this organization Mrs. Trumble joined by letter, and in the fall of this year Matt R. Evans, his wife and daughter—Miss Augusta Jane, the authoress,<sup>2</sup> came out from Georgia and joined by letter. . . . We took preliminary steps toward building a church in the city. I secured an eligible lot on Valita street, and we elected five trustees, viz: Wm. P. Kerr, Matt R. Evans, M. G. Cotton, Gustavus Ely and Marcus Y. Trumble. Mr. Trumble was not a member of our church, but a good friend of our cause and his wife an earnest and faithful member.

The work of housing this small congregation in its own building is to be a long and arduous task, to which we will return at a later period. This was a year of scant means and hard living for this far western pioneer, and it was one marked also by great sadness. In June he lost his first-born child, and in August his wife died, whom he characterizes as "a true helpmeet and a faithful servant of the Lord."

So much for the beginnings of Methodism in San Antonio. But before turning from DeVilbiss's narrative there is a story or two too good to leave unreported. During the year 1844 he reports that the Indians were hostile and travel was dangerous. There were seventy-eight horses stolen from the neighborhood of Gonzales

<sup>2</sup> Later Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson, of Mobile, Ala.

alone, and four or five men killed within the bounds of his circuit. "On my first round," he says, "as I was passing through the town of Gonzales, near night, on my way to Mr. T. J. Pilgrim's, who lived a mile above town, a man by the name of Jones came out of a saloon and caught my horse by the bridle, saying, Aint you our preacher?"

I told him I was the preacher sent to that circuit. "Well," he said, "you must go and stay with me. We keep the preachers." I saw he was in liquor and tried to beg off. I showed him the plan of the circuit, with Brother Pilgrim's name on it as a house for the preacher, and told him I felt it my duty to go there first. "No, no," he said, "you are to go with me. Pilgrim is a Baptist, and my wife is a Methodist, and you are to stay with us this good night. When we get to the house I'll show you why I am drinking." I concluded to go. As soon as I was introduced to the family, Mr. Jones requested me to walk out to the stable with him. There lay a large Newfoundland dog with an Indian arrow pierced right through his heart. "There," said Jones, "was as good a dog as ever wagged a tail. The Indians killed him last night and took out of this stable as good a colt as was ever raised in Gonzales county. Now, look here; do you see that door cheek of heart post oak, six inches wide and one inch thick. See how the red rascals have cut it off with their butcher knives to get the lock chain out? Well, sir, I had a race on that colt which was appointed for to-day. The forfeiture was forty dollars if I did not run. I went down to pay up like an honest man, and on the strength of it got gloriously drunk. Now you understand it all; let us go to supper." I found Sister Jones a very pleasant lady, and spent the night under their roof very agreeably. This man was generally known by the cognomen, "Go it Jones," or for short, "Goat Jones," to distinguish him from the numbers of the Jones name who lived in the vicinity. Not very long after this he was converted at a Cumberland Presbyterian meeting, joined that church, and for many years lived a most exemplary Christian life, and an honored and respected citizen. His wife died near the close of the year, and I had the mournful pleasure of preaching her funeral.

And the following snake story we add for no other reason than that we enjoyed it:

In May or June of this year I started from Lavaca, in company with United States Consul Smith, his wife, and two little Mexican girls that Mrs. Smith was raising, to go to Victoria. On account of the green-headed flies, we concluded to go at night, and, as the road was very muddy and much farther, we concluded to cross the prairie, taking the north star as our guide. After we had travelled about three hours our beacon became obscured by clouds, and we had to make our way as best we could. About one o'clock we came to a bunch of timber, and I knew we were lost, as there was no timber between Lavaca and Victoria. There was no alternative then but to stop and wait for the morning. Before I proceed I must say a few things about my friend, Consul Smith. He had a fine education; was an excellent business man, but was lacking in good, practical common sense. He was of low stature, somewhat stooped; was terribly disfigured by small-pox, and withal, lisped very badly. At the place where we stopped, the grass was very tall and thick and the mosquitoes just as bad as they could be. Mr. Smith and I had each a good mosquito bar, so we strung up his bar for Mrs. Smith and the children, and he and I fixed up mine for our accommodation. Mrs. Smith and the children were soon fast asleep, and I had just got off when Mr. Smith called out, "Mithter DeVilbith, I feel a thnake." I told him to lie still; if it was a snake it was under the blanket, and could not hurt us. He quieted down and I went to sleep again. He called again, louder than ever, "I tell you I feel a thnake, and I will not lie here any longer." As soon as he arose I felt a snake, too, and we got up and went to a log near by and fought mosquitoes until daylight. We looked for our snake in the morning, and found a crooked stick lying crosswise under our blanket, so that when I would move it would turn under Mr. Smith, and when he would move it would turn under me. So this was the snake that made us lose our rest.

Unlike the south and southwest Texas country, the rich prairies of northern Texas remained the free range of the Indian and buffalo until the early forties. To

encourage a more rapid settlement of the country the Congress of the Republic adopted measures looking to the introduction of new colonies of immigrants into Texas. Among other colonization schemes formed were those of W. S. Peters, who contracted during 1841-42 to introduce 800 families into the upper Trinity and Brazos country, and C. F. Mercer, who contracted to settle 600 families in the country between the Peters colony and Red River. These contracts covered all of the north Texas country, excepting the counties of Bowie, Red River and Lamar, and reached into the lower Panhandle country, including what was later "Greer County." The region on the Trinity, immediately about the present city of Dallas, was first settled in 1842-43. John H. Cochran, a late survivor of the first settlers, has written his recollections of this period,<sup>3</sup> from which the following extract is taken:

Early in 1843, my father, William M. Cochran, moved from Missouri to Texas in an ox wagon, stopping a few weeks in Red River County during a snowstorm. In February of that year he left Red River County in company with two other families, the Jamisons and the Watsons, and started south. Our family then consisted of my father and mother, two brothers, a sister and myself. There was also in the party a young man by the name of Steve Webb.

All together we came across this then wild and beautiful, but pathless, country, fording White Rock Creek just above where the home of Captain William C. McKamy now stands, and from there we went across the divide and down the branch, which my father afterward named "Farmers Branch." We stopped near this place with two bachelor brothers, John L. and Simpson Pulliam, two Virginia boys who had preceded us two or three months, and who had come to Texas with Thomas Keenan, an Indian, a man who himself settled in the forks of the branch about 300 yards north of the Pulliam place.

My father lived with the Pulliam brothers until he built himself a house of hewn logs, 16 by 18 feet, about 500 yards east

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Dallas News, 1918.



of the Pulliam cabin, near a lone elm tree which still stands there to mark the spot and remind me of a young buffalo which once came running toward me and stopped under the shade of that tree, within three feet of where I was, causing me to make a somewhat precipitate entrance into the house.

During the entire year of 1843 the population of Farmers Branch was limited to John L. and Simpson Pulliam, Thomas Keenan, his wife and three daughters—Elizabeth, afterward Mrs. Hiram Vail; Hannah, afterward Mrs. Thomas Chenoweth, and Mary, who married George Newby; two boys, William and Marion Keenan; my father's family of wife and four children, and the young man, Steve Webb. These sixteen persons constituted the total population of Farmers' Branch in 1843.

About this time a man by the name of John Hewitt planted a late patch of corn in the open prairie, near where Carrollton now stands, and the buffalo took possession of the patch. Mr. Hewitt then moved to Cedar Springs and with Dr. John Cole established the Cedar Springs neighborhood. In addition to Hewitt and his family and Dr. Cole and his family there were in the Cedar Springs settlement in 1843 Jackson and S. Hewitt, Joe Dalton, Dr. W. W. Conover, E. Shirley, and also Al. Hewitt, a negro, who was the first of that race to live in Dallas County.

Between Farmers Branch and Cedar Springs lived a man by the name of Joseph Graham, and one by the name of Browning (for whom Browning's Branch was named). Franklin Fortner later settled on Browning's Branch.

At Dallas was Colonel John Neely Bryan, the father of Dallas. East of Dallas was John Beeman and family and James J. Beeman and family. On the south side of the Trinity River M. Gilbert and family and William Coombes and family settled.

On Cedar Creek were George L. Leonard and family, John W. Wright and George W. Dooley, and on Mountain Creek lived Timothy Carpenter and family.

The above constituted the population of Dallas County in 1843. Those of us who lived here prior to 1845 lived under the Republic of Texas, and were here during the war of the United States with Mexico.

As each succeeding year rolled around the population increased and this then wild country gradually became a prosperous and happy home for thousands of people. With the in-



crease in population, the conveniences of churches, school-houses, stores, gins and other evidences of civilization kept pace. So rapid was the increase in population that on July 13, 1846, Dallas County was organized, with John Thomas as Chief Justice, Dr. John Cole as Probate Judge, John C. McCoy as District Clerk, William M. Cochran as County Clerk, and John Hewitt as Sheriff. Benjamin McCracken was the first Tax Assessor. Those settlers who moved into Dallas County during the period between December, 1842, and July, 1845, were mostly from Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky and Arkansas.

Another family which entered this country early in 1844 was that of the Webbs, from whose memorials we get more light on the Cochrans and others, and pick up an important thread in Methodist history. The Webbs, the Cochrans and the Hughes families were living in 1835 in Maury County, Tennessee. Isaac B. Webb during that year married Mary N. Hughes, a sister of W. H. ("Uncle Buck") Hughes. William M. Cochran (the father of the John H. Cochran quoted above), married another sister of W. H. Hughes. The Webbs and the Cochrans later removed to Missouri, but having "read much of the wonderful country lying contiguous to the three forks of the Trinity, they determined to locate permanently there."<sup>4</sup> Webb came down first on a prospecting tour in the spring of 1843, leaving Cochran in Missouri to make a crop. On his return he gave wonderful accounts of the possibilities of the country, and displayed samples of the black soil he had found. Cochran then came down in the summer or early fall of 1843, leaving Webb to gather the crop and follow later. Mrs. Cochran was doubtless, therefore, the first Methodist to actually settle in what is now Dallas County. From Webb's diary we have: "Commenced moving to Texas October 16, 1843, and four weeks later crossed the Red River at Beal's Ferry. Stayed in the

<sup>4</sup> These facts and the records which follow are from an article, "Early Methodism in Dallas County," by W. C. Everett, *Texas Christian Advocate*, Aug. 26, 1920. All the dates bearing upon the first settlement of the Cochrans do not correspond exactly with those given by Cochran.

neighborhood some two months and then moved on to the Colony. . . . Landed at Wm. M. Cochran's January 27, 1844." The Webbs lived in the Cochran home nearly two months, and during that time this entry is made in the Webb diary: "March 19, 1844, Thomas Brown, the first traveling Methodist preacher that visited the Colony, stayed all night with me and preached at Wm. M. Cochran's the first sermon in the neighborhood. From Romans 1:16; hymn, 'From All That Dwells Below the Skies,' tune 'Kedron.'" Webb records that he moved into his own cabin 16x16, on Mustang Branch (now Farmer's Branch) April 19, 1844. During the following year there is this entry: "The first circuit preaching was at my cabin on May 5, 1845, and a society was formed, consisting of five members. Isaac C. Kimble preached good." We have no record of this Isaac C. Kimble, and he must have been a local preacher. We know that Daniel Shook, who was that year on the Fannin circuit, Clarksville district, visited the community and took charge of the work. The names of the members of this first church in Dallas County were as follows: Isaac B. Webb, Mary Webb, Mrs. W. M. Cochran, M. F. Fortner and Mrs. Fortner. Wm. M. Cochran was not at that time a member of the church, but joined later. "The first camp meeting in this part of the country," says this old diary, "was held on Joe's Branch in the fall of 1845, and four families camped on the ground." The exact location of this spot, it appears, is not easy to determine. Mr. Everett gives us this information about the first church building: "Webb's Chapel was the first church building in the Colony, and was erected in the spring of 1846. It was located between what is now Cochran's Chapel and Farmer's Branch. No trace of it, so far as I can find, exists to-day. Mrs. Ford, a daughter of Isaac B. Webb, now owns the farm on which it was located. She lives on the corner of McKinney and Bowen Streets, Dallas. The church cost very little money, if any, and

was built by the members. No architects were employed, and no ornamental or memorial windows adorned it. It was a plain, substantial log meeting house, and met the requirements for a place to engage in real and sincere worship. That it soon became a community center is evidenced by this entry in the diary: 'The first school in the neighborhood was taught in the meeting house by Thomas Williams from Tennessee.' This was in the fall of 1846."

The following letter from Isaac B. Webb, dated "Upper Trinity, Texas, May 11, 1845," appeared in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, Nashville, in June of that year:

Brother McFerrin—Dear Sir.—Believing that a large portion of your numerous readers would be interested in hearing from this new and favored land, I beg leave to submit a few items to them, through your excellent paper, and if this fall under the notice of any of my old friends in Tennessee, and especially of Pruitt's Lick class, I would say to them, read this; and then determine whether or not it is your duty and interest to emigrate to this new, but desirable portion of the South-West. This portion of the Republic lies on what is called the forks of Trinity, in latitude 32 degrees North, in what is called Peters' Colony; a large grant of land made by the government of Texas to Peters and others, for the purpose of settling the public land of the Republic. The company donates three hundred and twenty acres of land to all actual settlers on their grant, who are the heads of families, and one hundred and sixty acres to single men. The land is equal in fertility to any in the West, being of a black, sticky soil, and very deep, with a consistency of about twenty per cent lime. The prairies are large and beautifully undulating and interspersed with springs, rivulets and fine streams of water, gushing from crystal fountains, and flowing off in bold and living streams, during the year. The timber is somewhat scarce, and chiefly along the water courses, consisting principally of post oak, Spanish oak, ash, chitum, elm, black walnut, and a variety of shrubbery. I have found the country, so far, to be healthy in general. Persons when first

settling here, sometimes, have some chills and fevers, but this is generally light, and afterwards they are healthy. The Trinity river is thought to be navigable to the forks—ten miles below my residence. We can raise, in this country, good corn, wheat, oats, and all kinds of garden vegetables, and as fine cotton as in any part of the United States. Our crops in the colony are very promising, corn above knee-high, and we are now harvesting our wheat, which is as good as I have seen in any country. We have a class formed here, consisting of eight or ten members, and have circuit preaching every four weeks. There are five appointments within the compass of fifteen miles. Methodism, with its characteristic zeal and untiring perseverance, is pioneering this far west with great success. Let Methodism be stopped and what will be the situation of the frontier settlers? Literally without a preached gospel for years yet to come. And, Oh, what indescribable anguish it gives us to witness the dark and portentous cloud that hangs over our beloved Zion. We can but give ourselves to prayer, that the God of Israel may direct her destinies. We lift our voices in the Macedonian cry to the local preachers of the States “come over and help us.” Here is a wide field for usefulness. Does not duty say, go where you are needed most? Here many can better their temporal circumstances and be more extensively useful as ministers. Yours, &c.

Isaac B. Webb, the mudsill of Methodism in Dallas County, was a native of Sullivan County, Tennessee, where he was born June 4, 1802. We have seen that by marriage the Webb, Cochran and Hughes families later became connected, and the first two families were represented in the first little church organized in Dallas County. Several members of the Hughes family later came to this country, and became closely identified with Methodism in many portions of northern Texas. After Isaac B. Webb moved into his own cabin on Farmer's Branch in 1844 he lived continuously in that locality until his death in 1880. What changes he saw in that time we will return to notice in later chapters.

In 1846 the Rev. Abner Keen moved to Texas from Indiana (though he was a native of Virginia), and settled



on Duck Creek in Dallas County. He was a local preacher, and for twenty-five years he ministered in that capacity in that region. In the same year James A. Smith, another local preacher, moved from Mississippi and settled in Dallas County, and for many years he was prominent in church affairs in that county.

Most of the preachers and others who came from the States to Texas were transformed into enthusiastic Texans at once, and became good advertisers for the country. They wrote letters "back home," and many of these letters were published in the Church press and other papers; and the influence these reports had in swelling the stream of immigration to Texas it is impossible to estimate, but it must have been very large. During 1845-46 the tide of immigration set in to Texas in real earnest. A letter from "Red River" to the editor of the Washington (Texas) *National Register* (March 21, 1845), says that "not less than 1,000 waggons have crossed Red River into Texas within six weeks." John W. Fields, in a letter to the *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, remarking about the great inflow of new population, estimates from the best information he could obtain from all sources, that the population of Texas was increasing at the rate of "about 500 souls per day." This, however, was only an example of the disposition to exaggerate which the bigness of Texas seemed to generate in most newcomers. We are informed from an extract from the secular press that German immigrants were coming in by the shiploads, and forming colonies in south and southwest Texas. This increasing German immigration received the attention of our Church at the conference of 1846 in the appointment of a missionary to the Germans in Galveston.

Out of a flood of correspondence from Texas, contained in files of the old *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, we will present only one other communication, containing reference to another matter which was receiv-



ing the attention of the preachers. This from M. Yell, presiding elder of the Washington district, dated Nov. 14, 1845:

Brother McFerrin,—We have good times in Texas. The Lord has been with us at all our quarterly meetings; but more especially our camp meetings. Many have been converted and added to the Church; but you will hear from the preachers. I will say, if my former letter has not come to hand, we have had a glorious work in the way of temperance. At Caldwell on Monday night, 25th August, we held a temperance meeting. There were in attendance about 75 or 80 persons; 67 out of that number joined or took the pledge. It is the Washingtonian pledge. On Monday evening, 3 o'clock, September 16th, at our camp meeting, which has been reported to you by the preacher, Rev. Robert B. Wells, Washington circuit, out of 225 or 300 persons present, something near 200 took the pledge. On the Franklin circuit our camp meeting closed yesterday morning. We had rather cold times, but few converts. But on Monday evening, 3 o'clock—for we devoted Monday evening to that work—we had an interesting time on the subject of temperance. There was a speech delivered and the pledge circulated. Out of about 150 persons, something over 90 took the pledge. So you can see we are beginning to do something for our people. I love my old friends in Tennessee and Memphis conference, but, brother, Texas is the country. We have a fine hospitable people; yes, and a people who love their preachers much. Give my respects to the preachers, and tell them that we should like much that the young men would look this way.

The sixth session of the Texas Conference met in Houston January 7, 1846, with Bishop Joshua Soule in charge. C. Richardson was again elected secretary. This conference formally ratified the action of the Louisville Convention in declaring for a separate church organization, and all the members declared their adherence to the Southern Church, in accordance with the privileges granted all members of annual conferences in the "Plan

of Separation." This action completed the division, so far as the Texas Conference was concerned, and all minutes, records, titles, etc., thereafter bore the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Robert Alexander and Chauncey Richardson were elected delegates to the General Conference, to convene in Petersburg, Va., the following May.

At this session of the Conference Stephen B. Whipple, Thos. B. Wooldridge and Jas. G. Hardin were admitted on trial. David L. Bell, John S. Williams and Jos. P. Sneed located. In the appointments the three districts—Galveston, Ruttersville and Washington—remained as last year, but C. Richardson was changed from the Ruttersville to the Galveston district; M. Yell was changed from Washington to Ruttersville district, and Daniel N. V. Sullivan was placed on the Washington district. Robert Alexander was stationed in Galveston. Orceneth Fisher at Houston, and three "stations" appear in the west this year—Austin, with H. S. Thrall; San Antonio, John W. DeVilbiss, and Corpus Christi, John Haynie; but this was done because the missionary treasury was so depleted that missions could not be organized or supported.

Bishop Soule, who was accompanied by his wife, left for New Orleans; thence he was to make his way up Red River toward Marshall, where the East Texas Conference was to assemble. Bishop Soule had not yet formally declared his adherence to the Church, South, but he was soon to do so. He had evidently made up his mind on the matter, and therefore felt thoroughly at home in the Southern conferences.

The first session of the East Texas Conference opened at Marshall on February 4, 1846. The bishop had not arrived at the opening, and Francis Wilson was elected president. Robert Crawford was elected secretary. Bishop Soule arrived on the 6th, and conducted matters to the close. The conference had met under the im-

mediate shadow of a great loss, as its most prominent member, Littleton Fowler, had died at his home near McMahan Chapel on January 29. A more extended notice of Fowler and his death will close this chapter. It seems to have been the custom in those days for the members of conference to wear a badge of mourning during the sessions in memory of deceased brethren, as we find a resolution adopted at this conference "that each preacher of this conference wear the usual badge of mourning during the session of the conference."

The following resolutions, and the action taken thereunder, appear in the reports of the conference:

Inasmuch as the Delegates from the Southern Conferences, in Convention assembled, in the city of Louisville, in May 1845, found it expedient to organize the Southern Conferences into a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction, according to the Plan of separation adopted by the General Conference of the M. E. Church, in May 1844, by which every preacher is allowed to attach himself to either division without blame;

Therefore, Resolved, That the roll be now called, and each preacher be required to answer *North* or *South*, that we may ascertain the relative position of each member and probationer—also, that each preacher be required to state the relative position of the membership where he has travelled during the past year.

The roll being called, all the preachers present, heartily took their position South. Bros. H. D. Palmer, A. J. Fowler, and F. H. Blades, though absent, sent their hearty assent to the South. Bro. Lester Janes, President of the Wesleyan College, sent his request to be transferred to the North, not that he is dissatisfied with the Southern Organization, but because his business requires him at present to remove North.

The question being asked each individual preacher, What is the relative position of the membership? It was found that there were three sisters and two brethren in the bounds of the Conference who were dissatisfied and preferred the North. . . . If there is any further dissatisfaction or murmuring we know it

not. The unanimous opinion of the Conference is, that the church has nothing to do with the relation that exists between slave and master.

The following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, the embarrassed state of our finance has most assuredly made it the duty of this Conference to adopt a rigid and well regulated system of finance. Therefore, Resolved, That it shall be the duty of each preacher who shall have charge of a circuit or station during the ensuing Conference year, to call a meeting of the Stewards at the earliest possible period, and lay before them his claims, and in case of neglect to do this, he shall have no claims upon the dividend at the next Conference.

J. W. FIELDS,

R. CRAWFORD.

Whereas, many of our travelling preachers have been reduced to poverty, and thereby compelled to reduce their work to a local itineracy for want of parsonages; and believing this to be the time when we should take immediate action on this subject; Therefore,

Resolved, that each minister or preacher in charge of the respective circuits within the bounds of the Eastern Texas Conference, shall use his influence and best efforts to erect, or cause to be erected (where it is practicable), a good comfortable parsonage during the ensuing Conference year.

H. Z. ADAMS,

J. W. FIELDS.

At this conference Michael F. Cole, Henry B. Kelsey and Andrew J. Fowler were admitted on trial. Robert Crawford and Henderson D. Palmer took the superannuate relation. Francis Wilson was elected a delegate to the General Conference.<sup>5</sup> A detailed report of the "number in society" throughout the conference is given, extracted from the General Minutes:

<sup>5</sup> If more than one delegate was elected there is no account of it in either the scant records of the Conference, or in the General Conference Journal.

## SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored
San Augustine .....	467	157
Jasper .....	283	91
Jefferson .....	50	3
Liberty .....	80	49
Crockett .....	337	10
Nacogdoches .....	189	134
Rusk .....	195	13
Henderson .....	217	12

## CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored
Shelbyville .....	365	25
Marshall .....	300	46
Lake Soda .....	339	41
D. Calb (DeKalb) .....	101	31
Clarksville .....	196	5
Paris .....	341	50
Fanning .....	150	5

Total membership, white—including 48 local preachers—2773; colored, 694. Increase over last year, white, 1030; colored, 270. The appointments this year show three districts—San Augustine, Geo West, P. E.; Marshall, S. A. Williams, P. E.; and Clarksville, Daniel Payne, P. E.; F. H. Blades was appointed president of Wesley College, and Andrew J. Fowler a professor and Harrison Z. Adams agent for the same institution. “Dallas Mission” appears for the first time in the appointments, with Orin Hatch in charge; also “Fort Sherman,” afterwards Sherman, with Daniel Shook in charge. Francis Wilson was appointed missionary “to the people of color” within the bounds of the Conference.

The next conference was appointed for Clarksville, and March 31, 1847, fixed as the date.

Littleton Fowler, whose passing this conference was called upon to mourn, was born in Smith County, Ten-



nessee, in 1803, the son of Godfrey and Clara Wright Fowler. In 1806 the family removed to Caldwell County, Kentucky, where Littleton grew to manhood. In June, 1820, he was converted at a camp-meeting held by the Cumberland Presbyterians, and soon thereafter joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was admitted on trial into the Kentucky Conference, at Louisville, in 1826, and appointed to the Red River circuit. A long spell of sickness forced him to return home, and he was not able to take work the following year. In 1828 he was appointed to Bowling Green station. In 1829 he was appointed junior preacher under H. H. Kavanaugh at Louisville station. This church, out of compliment to him, after his appointment to Texas, donated their old church bell to be installed in the church at San Augustine. Fowler filled various appointments in Kentucky until 1832, when he was transferred to the Tennessee Conference and stationed at Tuscumbia, Ala. He subsequently was appointed financial agent of LaGrange College, Tuscumbia, Robert Paine, afterwards elected bishop, being president. In this capacity Fowler served until his appointment as a missionary to Texas in 1837. His life and work in Texas are recorded in previous chapters of this history.

Two brothers had preceded Mr. Fowler to Texas, who became well known in the political affairs of the Republic. These were Col. John H. Fowler, who represented Red River and Lamar counties in the upper house of the Texas Congress in the winter of 1838, and Judge A. J. Fowler, who represented Lamar County in the lower house in 1841-42.

We have before noted that Littleton Fowler was married in June, 1838, to Mrs. Missouri M. Porter. Mrs. Porter was the widow of a merchant who came to Nacogdoches in 1835. Fowler was survived by his wife and two children—Mary Pitt and Littleton M. The daughter became the wife of Prof. G. M. L. Smith, who conducted

a school for many years in Nacogdoches County, and a son of this marriage was Ellis Smith, who became a prominent member of the East Texas Conference. Littleton M. Fowler was educated at old McKenzie College and entered the East Texas Conference in 1876. Littleton Fowler's widow later married Rev. John C. Woolam, of the East Texas Conference. She lived to be eighty-four years of age, dying in 1891.

Littleton Fowler, after his marriage, though he continued to serve regular appointments until his death, settled on a farm twelve miles east of San Augustine, and one mile from the McMahan Church, the oldest permanent Methodist society in Texas. Here in 1838 Mr. Fowler was instrumental in the erection of the first "McMahan Chapel," which has been displaced by two other buildings successively on the same spot. At his home here on January 29, 1846, at the age of only forty-three, Fowler died a triumphant death. His funeral services were conducted, by previous request, by Samuel A. Williams, and the funeral discourse was from a text also of Fowler's choosing—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." His remains were buried under the pulpit of the old McMahan Chapel, and in the present building, which stands on the same spot, the pulpit covers the grave, and his monument lifts itself into the pulpit, a conspicuous and perpetual reminder of the life and labors of one of the founders of Methodism in Texas.

Mr. Fowler was described as of striking personal appearance, above the ordinary height, of natural and easy manner, free from austerity and frigidness, and one who was at home in all social circles. His early education was very limited, but he possessed unusual intellectual powers, and being a great reader and student all his life, his manner and his preaching created the impression of culture and education. He reasoned accurately and logically, and addressed much of his sermon to the judgment. In the pulpit he would begin in the mildest man-

ner, and continue as if in conversation, or as if demonstrating a problem in mathematics; then warming with his subject his eye would kindle, his voice would be lifted, and his closing appeals were always earnest and winning. The impression which Fowler left upon our early history was out of all proportion to the brief span of his life in Texas. He wielded a great personal influence especially upon young men in drawing them into the ministry. Henderson D. Palmer and Daniel Carl were two conspicuous examples of Fowler's influence. The latter surrendered to a call to the ministry while in a private prayer-meeting which Fowler held with him in William Kesee's corn crib in Washington County, on a rainy day in the winter of 1837-38. Fowler's untimely end brought great sorrow to his brethren in the ministry, and cast a gloom over Texas, for he was known in circles beyond the bounds of his own Church.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE YEAR 1846

THE year 1846 was notable on account of several epochal events. One of these was the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Another was the completing of annexation of Texas to the United States, and following annexation in the same year occurred the War with Mexico, which settled the western boundary line of Texas, and established peace along that border. Besides these matters of general interest, the year witnessed many developments of local interest. It was in 1846, as we have seen, that the organization of the first Methodist Church in San Antonio occurred, and it was the year of the building of the first church in "Peter's Colony," as well as the year in which Dallas first appears in the appointments. It was in 1846 that beginnings were made in Corpus Christi, and this point on the southwest, and Dallas and "Fort Sherman" on the northwest are this year the points of our farthest advance westward. In 1846 a society was organized in Collin County by Rev. John Culwell, at the house of A. J. Culwell.<sup>1</sup> This was the year also when Methodism was first premanently established in Austin.

Concerning this last event we need to remember that Methodism in the capital—and everything else there—was bound up largely with the fortunes of the national government. In 1839, when the government was first moved to Austin, the young city enjoyed a considerable

<sup>1</sup> Thrall. We have no further particulars of this organization.

boom, and Methodist preaching was more or less regularly kept up there from that time until 1842, first by John Haynie, and then by Josiah Whipple. But 1842 was a disheartening year at the capital. In March the Mexicans came up and took San Antonio, and they appeared there again in the fall. The Indians continued to protest against the location of the capital in their territory by killing citizens caught off the reservation. President Lamar had had much labor and money expended on the erection of a stockade surrounding the capitol, but, according to a sarcastic local editor, this "would keep out pigs, but it would not turn Mexicans or Indians." President Houston called his congress to meet in Houston, and he and all the state officials vacated the capital, and most of the population followed. The number of inhabitants dwindled to less than one hundred; the streets grew up in weeds, and general dilapidation set in. The few citizens who remained were determined to retain the governmental effects, and they prevented, at one time by force of arms, the removal of the national archives, and when a more peaceful state of the country prevailed the government again took up quarters in Austin. In 1846 H. S. Thrall was appointed to Austin. He says he found no church organization of any kind. He organized a prayer-meeting and Sunday school, using the capitol for his services. He had no missionary appropriation and no stewards, and in order to pay expenses he opened a school. Following the return of government and the opening of the legislative body he says he found it difficult to find lodgings, and that he slept for weeks on the floor of a lawyer's office, obtaining his meals at different boarding houses in the city. For such a hard lot he was compensated in some degree by having the governor, senators, legislators and judges for his auditors when he preached at the capitol—plenty of honors, but little to eat or wear. "Preached this morning," is an entry he makes for April 26, 1847, "saw in



my congregation Gov. Henderson, Gen. Burleson, Ex-Pres. Lamar, Gov. Runnels, Judge Hemphill, E. M. Pease, and a majority of the members of the Senate and House." To advance a little into the next year, Thrall was returned in 1847. At a quarterly conference, held April 17, 1847, it was determined to build a church. Thrall says that he was that year not only preacher, but teacher, building committee, collector, pay-master and general manager of the building. Wanting funds on one occasion to pay for labor on his church he went down on Congress Avenue and entered the "grocery" of Tom Collins. The crowd gave him a hurrah, and wanted to know his business. He told them his troubles, whereupon they made up the money instantly and sent him away happy. The church was completed that year.

The annals of early Methodism in Austin would not be complete without a word concerning William Stuart Hotchkiss, a Methodist layman of the highest type and of the greatest usefulness. He came from Tennessee and settled in Austin in 1839, before the first sale of lots. He was a member of the first Methodist Church organized there, and through the succeeding fifty years of his life—he died in 1889—he served in various capacities as steward, class-leader, Sunday school superintendent and exhorter. By a second marriage he became the father of three Methodist preachers, well known in our later history.

Methodism in Houston, under the pastorate of Orceneth Fisher, came to the front in 1846 more rapidly than had been the case any year before. Mr. Fisher's first task was to clear the new brick church of debt. To accomplish this he made a tour in the States and raised most of the money. He then devoted himself to bringing about the long needed revival in Houston, and this he also accomplished that year beyond all expectations. A correspondent, reporting the meeting in the *South-western Christian Advocate*, says: "The Lord is doing

a good work for us in our city. We have had a protracted meeting in our church for the last twenty days, and it is now in progress. There are some conversions daily, and the good work seems to be going on. Forty-four whites and thirty or forty blacks have joined since the meeting commenced, but a larger number have been converted. Some have joined other churches. I believe that I never have seen a greater excitement in religion. In every group of men, from the church to the grog shop, their conversation is on religious subjects."

John Haynie at Corpus Christi had a "station" unlike any other in the country. The population of this place consisted largely of United States soldiers and camp followers, a situation the explanation of which we shall find in the annexation of Texas to the American Union. Texas, peopled as it was largely by citizens of the United States, and weak and exposed to enemies which endangered her existence, from the start sought annexation. But her big neighbor regarded her first overtures with indifference, and granted her only a grudging recognition of her independence. Houston, the first president, then had the offer withdrawn. Lamar, the second president, was opposed to annexation, and in Texas the subject lay quiescent for a few years; but it came to be discussed more and more in the United States. A strong party in the American republic opposed the absorption of Texas, as it held out a prospect of war with Mexico, and a large section of the North was averse to the proposition, as it meant the addition of more slave territory to the Union. The Texas annexation question came to a decisive issue in the presidential campaign of 1844, when "Polk and Texas" won a decisive victory over "Clay and no Texas." Mexico, as well as France and England, used every effort to prevent the consummation of the union; but the voice of the people of the United States and the people of Texas—expressed also in a popular election—agreed on the matter, and arrange-

ments were soon concluded putting the popular will into effect. On February 19, 1846, both the laws and postal service of the United States were extended over Texas, and on that date "President" Anson Jones turned over the affairs of the Republic of Texas to J. Pinckney Henderson, the first governor of the new state. Mexico had never acknowledged the independence of Texas, and had not relinquished its claim to the country, and the Mexican government had notified the United States that it would regard the annexation of Texas as equivalent to a declaration of war. The movement of events, and all the causes, leading up to war with Mexico, are matters to be found in Texas and United States histories. In the winter and spring of 1845-46 an American army under General Zachary Taylor occupied a camp near Corpus Christi, which brought that hitherto insignificant point suddenly into prominence, and explains the sending of a preacher there by the Texas Conference.

As portraying conditions there during Haynie's stay we can do no better than to take Haynie's own account, which is given in a letter to the *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, under date of February 15, 1846:

Bro. John B. McFerrin,—You will see from the minutes of the Texas Conference West, I was appointed to this place as missionary this year. I reached here on the 4th inst. I may say to you that Corpus Christi is situated on the Gulf of Mexico, in latitude 27.36 north, and west of the Nueces, some 75 or 100 miles out of what is called settlements; this being one of the depopulated counties. There is no law here; as the courts have not been organized as yet, and I must say, for a place where there is no law that can be brought to bear on crime, it is not as bad as I expected to find it. True, a few fellows get knocked down once and awhile, or shot or cut with a knife; but it is generally an unruly, drunken fellow, and there it ends, until he gets sober and knocks down some other drunken man, and so on to the end of the chapter. As it was when there was no king in Israel, every man walks in his own way or in the way of

somebody else. Well, I may tell you how I reached here (as my family is 200 miles from this;) when I reached old Laborde, famous for the struggle of Col. Fannin and his brave comrades, Capt. John T. Price, of the Rangers, politely furnished me an escort through. As to population I suppose soldiers and citizens, there must be somewhere between 5 and 7000 souls; and as to the character, of every hue; the object of the citizens would seem to be to make money, and they seem to be of almost all nations; some in houses, and some in cloth camps or cloth houses; there are said to be some 50 groceries, two Theatres, and I am told some 500 gamblers here. In fact it is the world in miniature, and must be seen to know anything about it satisfactorily. As a place to dispose of Mexican horses and mules, it beats anything I ever expected to see; horses sold from \$2 to \$20, and mules from \$6 to \$20, and no man that never saw a Mexican roping a wild horse can form any idea of their dexterity in roping them. The Union Theatre was obtained for me to preach in, and on the Sabbath, the 8th, I preached my first sermon, to a very attractive and well behaved congregation. After preaching, I explained the object of my mission, and that if a house could be obtained, I should like to preach twice on Sabbath and on Thursday night; when Major Brion, the manager of the Theatre, politely stepped forward and offered the use of the Theatre, when not otherwise occupied, which I as politely accepted, as no other house could be obtained, and notified the congregation that they might expect preaching there every Sabbath unless otherwise advised. So you see I have attacked the enemy on his own ground; what will be the result, God only knows. All things considered I think I have been as well received as I expected; several gentlemen have expressed themselves willing and anxious for my support. Owing to the scarcity of house room, I found some trouble to obtain a place to board and sleep in. Maj. Mann for the time furnished me with a berth in his counting room, which is as good a place as I have found as yet. I have obtained board at \$4 a week, so that all my expenses put together will be some \$5 a week. I have at least the honor of raising the standard of the cross at this outpost of our zion. . . . What Corpus Christi will be when the army leaves (which I am told will be in a few weeks) I cannot say, as the population seems to be mostly a floating one; and should they all leave of



course I will leave too; but certainly by nature it is designed for a place of considerable trade at no distant day.

The movement during the following month of Gen. Taylor's army toward the Rio Grande had the effect of almost depopulating Corpus Christi, and soon thereafter Haynie returned to his family at Rutersville.

The first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held at Petersburg, Va., in May, 1846, need not detain us long, as its work was chiefly that of organizing and setting in motion general Church interests. Bishop Soule declared his adherence to the Church, South, and he and Bishop Andrew, William Capers and Robert Paine, the latter two elected at this conference, made up our first College of Bishops. There was no break or necessary readjustments in Church machinery except in minor matters and in terminology, referring to the Church name. A new missionary society, with E. W. Schon as secretary, assumed supervision of all missionary interests, and separate publishing interests were instituted. The following action was taken, constituting an important relief measure for the preachers in Texas:

The Committee on Missions respectfully report, that it appears to be necessary for this General Conference to authorize the payment of some money from the Missionary funds, forthwith, for the relief of the most needy of the preachers of the Texas Conferences, no appropriations having been made at the last sessions of these Conferences. Your committee therefore recommend that you adopt the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Missionary Board be requested, and are hereby requested, to appropriate one thousand dollars to each of the Conferences in Texas, for the present relief of the preachers of said Conferences, and forward the same as early as practicable.

Thus with the year which marks the incorporation of Texas into the American Union, and at the same time the



passing of Texas Methodism under the jurisdiction of the new Methodist Episcopal Church, South, we close the first section of this history. But before passing from the "Republic" period it is in order to introduce a few of our miscellaneous collection of old letters and records which will help to fill up the picture of the times through which we have been passing.

Here is a letter from "Milam County," dated September 21, 1842, on rumors following Gen. Woll's capture of San Antonio:

Times are much as they were when you left, with the exception of the invading war spirit which has in a measure subsided, owing principally to the course pursued by our worthy President! !<sup>2</sup> I suppose you have seen his celebrated veto message, which taken with his message to the extra session and several other state documents of his, is the most foolish and inconsistent thing imaginable. Popular opinion run strongly against him at the time, but has now settled down to a tacit acquiescence, leaving the responsibility on him.

A circular is going the round purporting to be from the citizen soldiers of San Antonio, which states that on last Monday week a party of Mexicans appeared in town they were immediately fired on by the Texians who imagined it to be a small robbing party thought to repel them, in this they were mistaken, for it proved to be the advance of an invading army under the command of Gen Don Adrien Woll, finding this to be the case they were compelled to surrender prisoners of war, the number being fifty-three. Gen Woll is represented to be quite a Gentleman allowing them to write this circular to apprise us of their capture and likewise to request of the Texians to treat well any prisoners they might make, as they were "treated well," this is signed by a dozen names among which is Judge Hutchinson, who was holding court, and whose situation was soon changed from a Judge to a prisoner. There is no doubt but that the Mexicans are there but in what force is not known, it is the prevailing opinion here that Mexico is not able to send an invading army and this is to be believed to be a marauding party

<sup>2</sup> Lamar.

similar to the one which entered the place in the spring, if it is an invasion you will hear it before long.

A letter from Baltimore, written in instalments from Oct. 28 to Nov. 10, 1844, advising a family in Texas of the progress and results of the presidential campaign, reached Washington, Texas, Jan. 20, 1845. Under date of Nov. 3:

Tomorrow is the election of President and Vice President of these United States. the excitement is high all sorts of sentiments and emblems are resorted to by Both parties the Democratic show on thare (emblems) and go for it strong Texas and Origin our southern and north-western boundary line.

Under date of Nov. 7:

The election excitement has not subsided although the President is made yet excitement now is to get the results together Pensylvania has gone for Polk Va has Do we are all on the qui vive for the returns from N Y which will decide the contest the Whigs are low spirited they are the opposition to annexation

And in the closing paragraph of the letter, after a few days more:

The contest is over, and James K Polk is Elected President of this great Republic. . . . Never was thare so dangerous set of people in the world as the partie denominated the Whig partie I must confess Honestly that my opinion is that the foreigner Holds the balance of power but why have they not got them as well as the Democrat

A farm boy from Burleson County tries "city life" in Houston and Galveston during the winter of 1844-45, and there follow a few sketches from his letters home:

Galveston, Jan. 25, 1845 I arrived here on thursday morning in the steamer Col. Woods twelve hours from Houston, and four-

teen days from home. My "Pilgrimage" to Houston was a long and tiresome one, it would be too tedious to enumerate the many times we stuck in the mud, and were compelled to unload— suffice it to say we arrived safe and sound on the twelfth day— sold my cotton for  $3\frac{5}{8}$  cts per pound and at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  past 9 on the evening of the next day embarked for this place.

Business is dull at present, lumber is scarce and the place overstocked with Dutch carpenters, no less than three brigs now lying in port from Bremen . . . board and lodging is four dols per week . . . my lodgings command a view of four churches and the principal part of town. . . . Tomorrow is Sunday—I will try and write you an account of the way I spent it, so for the present good night.

Monday 27th Yesterday morning the bell of the catholic church rung for Mass before I was out of bed, and by the time I dressed breakfast was waiting, so this much of the day passed off unimproved. After breakfast I went to the Methodist church in which Sunday school is held— here the days of yore came up strong in my remembrance and my feelings were such as I cannot describe after school Mr. Huckins a baptist minister preached— Text— "Is there no balm in Gilead" &c Judge Longstreet concluded the services by prayer. . . . At four O'clock we repaired to the presbyterian bible class held in their church— and here let me express my satisfaction at the society here— Galveston is not so aristocratic as Houston— those in attendance on the bible class were the young ladies and gentlemen (apparently) of the first class in the city, and I was much pleased with them. from here we returned home and after Tea repaired again to the Methodist church and heard a sermon by Judge Longstreet Text "And they all with one consent began to make excuse." The singing carried my mind back to the days of the "old frog eyes" (illegible) the same tunes were sung here—tunes that I had forgotten.

Tuesday 28th The brig "Rodney" from New York has just come to anchor outside the wharf, and the steam ship "McKim" from New Orleans having on board Col- Navarro, who has made his escape from Mexico. The military are making preparations to receive him in a suitable manner. . . . Tell Gregg I forgot in my letter to him, to mention what I got for my cotton. You can inform him, there was 450 lbs and I sold it

for 3 dols 5 bits per hundred and I could not have got so much for it but I got it off with a lot of hides. the amount received by me for the cotton was 16.31 cts

30th 9 O'clock P M. I've just returned from Class meeting we have an excellent leader—

Galveston, Feb. 23, 1845 Upon my first coming here times looked quite gloomy nothing to do and expenses heavy, the first week I spent in walking through town, but finding it fatiguing and unprofitable I had almost made up my mind to go to Corpus Christi when I fell into a small job of 8 or 9 days at two dols per day, before concluding this I was engaged again at the same price and have been employed ever since and expect to be for some time to come. . . . I find City life agrees with me very well, and should things work round to suit I may settle permanently here.

March 2d This is the anniversary of Texian independence and in honor of the occasion the flags of the shipping are flying, and three salutes were to have been fired, the first I did not hear, being sound asleep (for I sit up late on Saturday nights) the second at twelve, jarred the church in which bro Williams was preaching—and unfortunately the vent of one of the guns not being properly stopt one of the persons engaged had an arm blown off—the next will be fired to night the Galveston Guards are to parade this afternoon As to day is Sunday to morrow is to be the great day, the occasion will be celebrated by the sunday schools—a colation will be served in the Methodist Church, and Oration &c

Houston, Dec. 8, 1845 There is one thing that makes against me so much rain and as my work is principally out of doors if it continues I will have to lose a great deal of time which will go very much against the grain the city now is more like a pig sty now than any thing else mud from shoe mouth to half leg deep and if it continues to rain much longer it will be utterly impassable Wm King wrote up in his letter that goods was remarkable cheap but it is all a mistake goods groceries and in fact every thing except coffee is very high Flour is selling at \$12 per Barrell and coffee 12cts per pound every thing according . . . now I think of it I sent up that bottle of ink by Alvin and before this reaches you he will have gotten home . . . the first good chance I get after I get some money I will

send you up some goose quills for you to take notes with and so forth

An extract or two from replies to the above letters may be added. Among other items may be mentioned a strong protest against a charge of \$2 postage made by the postmaster at Caldwell on a bundle of papers sent up from Galveston. The writer in this case is Isaac S. Addison, father of the young man writing from Galveston:

I laid the floor and hung the doors of the meeting house since the time you left here. Robert Scott brought some plank to make a pulpit to day; so soon therefore as possible, I shall begin to work on it. I am charged by your mother to write to you to get you to buy her two lids for the oven and two for the scillet and to try and get them conveyed here before camp meeting, for her old lids are worn out. . . . I have right smart of work engaged here; but when it will be done I cannot tell. I am tired of working and never getting one red cent, no not so much as \$1.27 to pay my taxes,—my land was sold for this trifle; Niebling had 23,000 acres sold, Lewis's with them; the reason mine and his was sold we did not know the time (illegible) he has redeemed his and mine by paying one dollar on mine and one on his; I stand pledged to pay him again \$2.27 in money, and where I am to get it I know not; nor is this the worst, one quarter has gone, and the second far advanced, and I have not been able to give our Minister any quarterage.

The following letter from "home" is by a younger brother, and contains some observations about the camp-meeting at Waugh Camp-Ground which an older head would have overlooked or ignored:

July 8, 1846 We received your letters on yesterday, the day that our camp meeting broke up, and as you desired to hear how we got along I will give you a short sketch of it. It commenced on last Thursday the 2d with very dull prospects, the incessant rains had filled all the streams so that but very few could get there. . . . On Thursday night all the preachers that we had was Bro Sullivan & Bro Bragg the meeting commenced with



poor prospects on Friday night Brothers Sneed Harden (who was below the Yegua) Cyrus Campbell an Exhorter Bro Belvin a young Preacher arrived on the ground which constituted all our force, a very weak one you must confess to fight the friends of Satan, But notwithstanding the work commenced and but for Bro Sullivan might have went on with power But from some cause or other, he became a great enemy to excitement, he did not like to see people getting religion under an excitement, he wanted them to come coolly and deliberately— there was several very warm sermons preached and Exhortations delivered but *Old Dan* would throw water on it all It continued this way (with but one conversion) till Monday night when Bro Sneed Preached a very warm feeling sermon and set down. Bro S getting up immediately after he read out a long Hymn and after exhorting a few moments told all those that had made up their minds to get religion to come forward without any excitement of any kind, as he did not like to see people scared into religion. Now just come along without any persuasion or any singing—— Just at that moment Brother Bragg rose up and calling to the Brethren, said sing that good old song “Come ye Sinners poor and needy”—perhaps some will come—that was just taking it out of the Presiding Elders Hand and the Brethren being nothing loth went to work with a will that soon filled the Alter with Mourners—— Well after all had come up that would come Bro Dan got down in the Alter and read off his long Hymn again a half stanza at a time and commented on it as he went along without any singing however when he got down and prayed a long prayer and kept on that way until they just took it out of his hand and carried it by main force—— after he left the work commenced and before the meeting broke up (which it did at 15 minutes before three) there was eight professed to obtain the pearl of great price——

Another letter from a member of the same family, written to the father, who had gone to Houston in the fall to seek work, is of interest in that it informs us of the sort of texts used by the preachers in those days, and contains the first reference we have seen to the “second blessing,” or the experience of perfect love. The meeting referred to was a quarterly meeting:

I will commence with our meeting which commenced the fourth friday and lasted till sunday night we had five preachers at the beginning Sullivan bragg belvin Rottenstine I believe that is the way it is spelled and stansberry the meeting was commenced by brother stansbery who preached from Seek ye first the kingdom of god and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you which was followed by bro Belvin from believe on the lord Jesus christ and thou shalt be saved saturday morning bro Rottenstine the dutch preacher preached an excellent sermon from some have not the knowledge of god I speak this to your shame saturday night bro belvin preached from for we must all appear before the judgment seat of christ and be punished or rewarded according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or whether they be evil Rottenstine Preached again sunday morning from let there be light a great sermon Sunday at dinner time a Preacher came here on his way from Austin belonging to the eastern conference by the name of friend he preached for us at 3 oclock I forget his text bro Belvin Preached again at night from He that hardeneth his heart and stiffeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that with remedy there was a very good feeling throughout the meeting but no conversions and thus ends our meeting . . . our society is getting along pretty well I believe they all or the most of them are striving for the blessing of perfect love

The last of these family missives is from the young man who had spent the winter in Galveston, but who has since been licensed to preach and is now (June, 1846) in eastern Texas studying and "practicing" with a friend, Robert Crawford, preparatory to entering conference:

Yesterday morning at 11 Oclock I attended meeting in the town of Marshall and was much gratified at the appearance of the congregation. This county you must know for the last 3 years has been in a state of anarchy—the law set at defiance, every man thinking he had a right to avenge his wrongs proceeded to dispence Justice, and gratify revenge. The result was a formation of two parties— The "Regulators" took it upon themselves to manage affairs, punish offenders in a sum-

mary way and conduct affairs to their own liking. The better class opposed this and hence the "Moderators." Various acts of atrocity were committed by both parties, and Dr. Kelsey (the gent at whose house I am staying) informed me to night that since he had been living in the county, 60 murders have been committed, and a greater part under his immediate observation. Such acts of lawlessness have gained for the community a bad name, and not undeservedly—— a short time before my arrival here two men were shot in the streets in broad daylight, and an affray ocured in port Caddo yesterday in which a man was wounded,—supposed mortal. On the whole society is rapidly improving there are but a few of the lawless ones left, and they will have to yield to the moral improvement daily increasing.

The congregation was highly respectable, both in size and character and gave me a very favorable idea of the society of the place. Both the circuit preachers were present—bro Stovall gave us a discourse from "The righteous is more excelent than his neighbor" my lot was to conclude which I did, much against my inclination. After service we were invited by a gentleman home to dine, during which the wine bottle was passed around, though out of three preachers but one partook. In the afternoon attended Class meeting and at night tried to preach to a large and interesting congregation—— I tried hard to beg off, but It would not do—— this was a great trial, and I felt like I had made a complete failure. The gentleman with whom I spent the night seeing my discomfiture, tried to encourage me by telling me I done quite well and advised me to go ahead and thunder away this from a man who made no pretentions to religion was a little comforting, but still I could not get over my bad feelings.

One characteristics of this early period, and which survived in the Church until far later times, was the practice of a strict administration of discipline against those who walked disorderly. Numerous examples and records might be cited of thorough and solemn procedure in such cases, the majority of them being lay members; but a few local preachers also appear for trial. Be it said to the credit of the traveling preachers that, though often

sorely tried with much profitless labor and scanty support, there appears nothing against any of them so far as our records go.

With the following case as an example of "discipline," we will bring our record to a close for the present:

March 25th A. D. 1845

The fowling charges ar Prefurd against James Davis a member of the M. E. Church at New hope (V. Z.) the first charge is for having shot a yearling Bull a stray and skinning it and Leaving the carcus in the woods.

the Second is for having shot a Beef Belonging to Mortimer Duneheew three or four times Leaving it un Kiled

the Day Being set for tryal after Due notice having ben Given to the accused all Parties being Present the Rev. . J. G. Johnson took the Chear, and E. D. Johnson D. G. White and James Bell ware appointed committy Prear by the Rev. . J. G. Johnson after which E. D. Johnson was appointed Sec. .—

Mr. . Davis Pleads not Guilty to the first charge Mr. . Smith a witness states that he was in the woods and meets Mr. . Davis.s Son with the hide and asked him if he had been Boocheering and he Replide that it was a hide they had just taken of from a Little Bull they had found Dead he then ast him where it was and he told him it was Just over the turn of the hill he Left the Boy and went to the carcus and found that it had been shot threw the heart and the Blud was Running warm Round the heart he then Left it and went and Got W. B. Whitfield and Mr. . Arnold to Go with him to Examine the carcus and they found some strips of hide having in them the appearance of a Bulit hole that had been cut out with a knife

W. B. Whitfield a witness States the Same of Mr. Smith in Relation to the carcus and strips of hide Mr. . Arnold.s testimony coresponds with Mr. . Smiths and Mr. . Whitfield.s

Testomony in Part and Behalf of Defendant— R. Davis a son of Defendant states that Mr. Smith Son shot this Bull Some time Before Say fore or five Days Before the Bull was Skind— Galliton a Son of Defendant States that he met Mr. . Smith and told him that the carcus was over the turn of the hill— Mr.

Lewey States that the Bull was his and Mr. Davis Paid him for the Bull Mr. Floyd States that Mr. Davis Paid Lewey

2d Charge

Mr. Davis States that he Did Shute the steer with an Entente to kill the Same Beleaving it to Be his it Being in the Same Mark and Brand Excepting —J— it Being very Wilde

Mr. Smith States that the Beef was very Gentle and Lay at his Cow Pen Every Night

We the Committy Do unanimously agree that James Davis is Guilty of the Charges aleged against him which Charges we Beleave to be Suficient to Exclude a Person from the Kingdom of Grace and Glory

March 25 th A. D. 1845

E. D. JOHNSON—Com. .

JAMES BELL “

D. G. WHITE “

This case was appealed to the quarterly conference of Montgomery circuit, and the minutes of the conference show that the action of the committee in expelling the accused was affirmed.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### EAST TEXAS CONFERENCE, 1847-1850, AND GENERAL CONFERENCE, 1850

THE third session of the East Texas Conference was held at Clarksville, opening on March 31, 1847, and closing on April 7, with Bishop Paine in charge. Oscar M. Addison and Richard Ransom were received on trial; Jacob Crawford, Milton H. Jones and Nathan Shook located; Job M. Baker took the supernumerary relation, and Robert Crawford and Henderson D. Palmer were placed on the superannuated list. Joab H. Biggs, from the Arkansas Conference, R. W. Kennon, from the Louisiana Conference, and A. Cumming, from the Indian Mission Conference, were received by transfer, and Lewis S. Marshall and Oscar M. Addison were transferred to the Texas Conference.

The "numbers in society," reported at this conference were as follows:

SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT			MARSHALL DISTRICT		
	Whites	Colored		Whites	Colored
San Augustine Sta..	49	67	Rusk.....	205	3
San Augustine Cir..	329	76	Henderson.....	200	16
Jasper.....	286	90	Shelbyville.....	303	16
Liberty.....	155	26	Marshall.....	260	14
Nacogdoches.....	190	143	Cypress.....	65	
Angelina.....	82	1	Crockett.....	62	2
	1172	465	Fort Houston.....	133	8
				1258	89

CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT			RECAPITULATION		
	Whites	Colored		Whites	Colored
Clarksville.....	196	36	This year.....	3682	764
DeKalb.....	96	26	Local preachers.....	33	
Paris.....	300	104			
Bonham.....	170	5		3715	764
Dallas Mission.....	60	2	Last year.....	3773	694
Dangerfield.....	221	27			
Fort Sherman.....	141	8	Decrease.....	58	
Kingsborough.....	68	2	Increase.....	...	70
	1252	210			

These figures disclose the fact that Paris leads the conference in total membership, followed by Jasper and Nacogdoches in order, although San Augustine circuit, the oldest Methodist territory in the conference, shows the largest number of white members.

In the appointments the districts stand as last year, and these, with their presiding elders for 1847, are as follows: San Augustine district, John W. Fields, P. E.; Marshall district, Samuel A. Williams, P. E.; Clarksville district, Daniel Payne, P. E. No new appointments appear, except Trinity, in the San Augustine district, and Jefferson, in the Marshall district. Bonham and Dallas missions are combined, with Joab H. Biggs and M. F. Cole the preachers.

Of the conference year that followed we have but one brief reference, and this from the written journal of John W. Fields, as follows:

April, 1847. At the Conference at Clarksville, I was appointed P. E. of the San Augustine District. This was an afflict-  
ing appointment to me in many respects, especially in view of my age in the ministry (this being only my fifth year in the Itineracy); and in consequence of a severe difficulty between two ex-Presiding Elders Wilson & West both of whom now resided in the bounds of my work.

But I set out in trembling & in tears resolving to go and do the best that I could. Attended the wedding of Bro. Blades & Miss Swanson on Soda Lake—had a pleasant time, spent a few days recreating chiefly fishing on the Lake. Long will I remember this feast, especially the kind family of Bro Blocker.

Reached my District, and commenced my labors under many embarrassments. Spent the year as best I could; and to what profit if any to the Church, the Lord must judge.

This was a short conference year, the next session of the conference being held in San Augustine, opening on December 8, 1847—just nine months from the close of the former session. Bishop Capers presided. Only one preacher was admitted on trial—Felix G. Fawcett. Job M. Baker, Foster H. Blades, Robt. Crawford, Orrin Hatch, Robert W. Kennon and Francis Wilson located. The statistics show an increase of 521 white members, and a decrease of 127 colored. The appointments show the same districts, with the same presiding elders, with the exception of Clarksville district, for which no presiding elder is shown in the minutes. New appointments appearing are: Henderson, Cherokee, Upshur, Smith County Mission, Grayson, Greenville, Mt. Pleasant, Boston, Beaumont (in connection with Liberty), and Palestine. Concerning the organization at Palestine Thrall says: "In 1840 John Wilson, a supply on the Crockett Mission, organized a class near where the city of Palestine now stands, in the house of Roland Box. When the county of Anderson was created, and Palestine selected as the county seat, the Society removed to the new town." Henderson D. Palmer was appointed to the first Palestine circuit in December, 1847.

Reverting to the Journal of John W. Fields we learn of another incident or two occurring at this conference:

Decr 1847. Conference held at San Augustine. Bishop Capers presiding. At this Conference we had troubles times. The old Wilson & West case revived; and after spending two

days in trial, resulted in the suspension of both. The Conference afterwards reconsidered the case of Wilson and granted him a location. This was an injudicious step. The Bishop was in bad health; and his stock of patience being exhausted, gave vent to a petulant class of feelings which very much soured the Conference with him. Here too we had a dreadful "blow-up" of the Wesleyan College. The Trustees, through intrigue taking advantage of some legal defectability of the Charter, had amalgamated it with a state University, over the head of the Conference. Now all the recourse we had was to their *honor*, and that be (ing) so *lean* nothing in return could be had for buildings & fixtures worth say \$15,000. Alas the folly of a weak young Conference to undertake to rear Colleges, before she is able to sustain them; or understands how to legally hold them.

We could, of course, eliminate from these remarks all personal references, as the writer's observations were not made for publication; but so long as nothing appears to be set down in malice we see no reason for expurgating the record. It is always easy to think of the pioneers as being a more heroic and saintlier company of men than we know to-day. But in reality they were men "of like passions with ourselves," though we must concede to them more hardihood and heroism than we are called upon to exercise to-day.

The loss of Wesleyan College was a severe one to the Eastern Conference. The institution was granted a charter by the Congress of Texas on January 16, 1844, but this charter, it was discovered when too late, was fatally defective so far as it was intended to guarantee Methodist control. The Rev. Lester Janes, a relative of Bishop Janes, was the first president. He was later succeeded by the Rev. Foster H. Blades, A.M., who was in charge at the time of the "blow-up." Francis Wilson had acted as financial agent, and during the four years of its existence under Methodist control the preachers and others had raked and scraped for funds until the buildings and equipment represented an investment of fifteen

or twenty thousand dollars. The energy and spirit which projected this educational venture is worthy of all praise; the preachers and people did their part nobly, but their efforts were defeated by the internal management. As to the courses offered at Wesleyan College, these seemed to run mostly to languages. In a printed circular sent out under date of February 1, 1846, it was stated that "in addition to Latin and Greek, other ancient languages will be taught when desired—Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Samaritan." Also full courses were offered in French and Spanish, and "German and Italian will be taught if required." The institution was credited with one A.B. and one A.M. graduate. During the year 1847, apparently without the consent of anybody, the trustees "amalgamated" the institution with a state school located at San Augustine, and a new charter was procured, placing it under state control. The old college building was burned down in 1868, while the East Texas Conference was in session at San Augustine.

The conference met in December, 1848, at Henderson, with Bishop Andrew presiding, and Isaac M. Williams secretary. From Bishop Andrew's "Miscellanies" we learn: "There is as yet no house of worship, but the different denominations occupy the lower room of a house, the upper part of which is a Masonic hall, and a Division room for the Sons of Temperance. We are about building a house of worship pretty much in the same way. . . . Henderson is not the only place in the state where the church and the lodge are in close neighborhood. . . . One single fact indicates that temperance principles are quite influential. I was told that there were about five hundred voters in the county, and there are two Divisions of the Sons of Temperance, numbering about four hundred members."

At this conference the following were admitted on trial: William Jameson, Samuel C. Box, E. S. Powell, Wm. N. Harmon, Thomas L. Burnes, Samuel G. Culver,



Wm. Blue, Jas. G. Hardin. Henderson D. Palmer, D. Shook, Jas. H. Stakes, and Daniel Payne located. William G. Booker and Henry B. Kelsey had died during the year. John B. Tullis was received by transfer from the Alabama Conference and Orceneth Fisher and Robert B. Wells from the Texas Conference. The published obituaries give the following facts relating to the deceased brethren:

William G. Booker was born in Tennessee Nov. 13, 1816; was sometime a resident of Alabama, and from thence emigrated with his father in 1839 to Panola county, Texas. Was converted and joined the M. E. church about 1834; was licensed to preach in 1842; joined the Texas Conference in 1845, during which year he travelled the San Jacinto circuit; in 1846 appointed to Liberty circuit; admitted into full connection and ordained deacon in 1847, and appointed to Henderson circuit. During the year his health entirely failed, and at the ensuing conference he was granted a year's rest. He died on the 21st of January, 1848, at Col. Hardin's, in Liberty county, in much peace. He left a widow. He was a pious man, a zealous minister, and a faithful pastor. He would often arise from a sick bed and go to an appointment, and his early death was brought on by his excessive labors.

Henry B. Kelsey was a native of the state of New York, born in 1798. Entered the ministry in South Carolina about the year 1820 or 1821. Travelled two or three years and located. He then studied medicine and engaged in the practise of physic. Removed to Tennessee in 1832 or 1833, and about 1838 came to Texas. When our ministers found him in Texas he was in a backslidden state, out of the church and totally fallen. He again joined the church, and was restored to his standing as a local preacher. Received on trial into the East Texas Conference at Marshall in 1846. As a physician he stood high with the medical faculty; as a minister he was much admired for his talents.

At the conference of 1848 a new district was formed, called the Trinity district, covering mainly the Trinity valley. John W. Fields was appointed presiding elder.

Fields had returned to Kentucky the year before, and on August 6th, 1848, had married Miss Winna Ann Duncan, making the trip back to Texas in a buggy. From Field's journal we learn of some of the events of the year on his new district:

In January after a month's rain we set out for my new home in Kaufman county, then in a central portion of my new district, which was about 200 miles square. After wading and swimming mud and water and staying in the most miserable huts at night we reached Kaufman about 1st Feby, a distance of 140 ms. My poor wife bore it all with uncommon cheerfulness and fortitude. But when we arrived my house was not yet finished, so we remained boarders a while, and finally moved into a log cabin 16 feet square, without door, shutters, without kitchen or anything to put in it. Thus we lived one year, from hand to mouth, when we could get it. My wife taught a small school 3 months for which she realized about \$12. I travelled my district for which I realized about \$300. The expense and trouble of moving was great; and the privations after reaching there still greater. The country new—provisions scarce and high, the season extremely wet and sickly. At last my wife and I both took sick and lay for weeks without much attention. . . . In the fall of this year (1849) my friends at Palestine made me a liberal offer to move and settle there. Accordingly in the following winter I left my Prairie home in the care of a brother and moved to Palestine.

The fifth session of the East Texas Conference met at Paris, Nov. 29, 1849, with Bishop Paine presiding, and I. M. Williams as secretary. At this conference William P. Sansom, H. B. Hamilton, Calvin Askins, Neil Brown, and Sam. Lynch were admitted on trial. Richard Ransom, Arthur Davis, and Joab H. Biggs located, and Enoch P. Chisholm took the supernumerary relation. Orceneth Fisher, after one year on the Marshall circuit, transferred back to the Texas Conference.

The statistics showed an increase of 690 white members and 12 colored. The new Trinity district included the appointments of Kingsboro, Dallas, Grayson, Green-

ville, Smith County, Cherokee, Palestine, and Sabine mission, with 1348 white members and 39 colored. Dallas mission had increased in membership to 279. The financial report of the conference, covering the "Conference Collections," shows \$17.61 raised to apply to deficits on preacher's salaries and for the relief of widows and orphans of preachers. This munificent amount was appropriated as follows: D. Poe's children, \$2.60; to L. Fowler's children and widow, \$5; W. G. Booker's widow, \$5; H. B. Kelsey's widow, \$5. Total amount raised for missions, \$414.

A notable rise in membership had taken place at Marshall. In 1847, 233 white members were reported. In 1848 this number had increased to 644, and in 1849 to 707, being more than double the membership of any other charge in the conference. The explanation is given in the "Reminiscences" of Dr. John H. McLean, whose boyhood was spent in this section. Referring to these years he says: "My mother moved back to Harrison County in 1849 with her possessions and established a home with her parents five miles east of Marshall. On the premises stood a peck sawmill, as it was called—a flat blade about three feet in length, with a peck or tooth at each end, which manufactured about four or five hundred feet of lumber per day. . . . On the place was erected a gin and cotton press, with a capacity of one and a half to two bales a day. . . . Here for the first time in my life I was brought in contact with an organized Christian community. We had regular circuit preaching by Rev. N. W. Burks as pastor. For the two years he was on this, the Harrison circuit, he had over one thousand conversions and additions to the church, and of the number were my mother and other relatives. He was a master of men, of commanding size and forceful speech, and well educated for his day."

This writer gives us all we know of Daniel Payne, who had served the previous year on the Clarksville dis-

trict, while the McLean family lived in Bowie County. Payne, we have noted, located at the end of the year, and we are told that he joined in the first rush to California after the gold discovery, but that he was murdered by Indians on the way.

In the appointments made in 1849 we note that the new Trinity district is much reduced in size, and that John W. Fields is reappointed presiding elder, with headquarters at Palestine. From his "Notes From My Saddle-Bags" we have a more detailed report of one round made on his district:

April 1st and 2d—Attended the Quarterly Meeting for Palestine circuit, at Wilson Academy—congregation large and serious—preached with some liberty from Eph. III 14 20.

Sabbath morning had a most precious Love-Feast. At 11 o'clock, preached from IX, 26-28, the Lord applied the word; and at the table we felt His presence very near.

April 8th and 9th—Attended the Quarterly Meeting for Cherokee circuit at Rusk. Found a feeble, faint and fearful church, everything unfavorable to religion to contend with. During Quarterly Conference I started a proposition to build a meeting house, subscribed \$5 myself to encourage the country brethren to do something. In this little mite I was nothing loser, as a liberal California gold-digger placed in my hand the amount at the close of conference. A new and important lesson was this in the doctrine of special providence. This church is likely to be completed in a few months, as there are now several hundred dollars subscribed, and the right class of men on the building committee.

Sabbath morning—Attended a fine Sabbath school in the infancy of its organization. About 100 pupils present. Also attended a fine Bible class in the afternoon. These institutions tell well on the little town, and will doubtless make the rising generation better, if indeed it should fail to redeem the present adult, adulterated population which have hitherto been considered irredeemable. I preached a plain sermon at 11 o'clock, leveled at sin generally and all the views of this day, particularly. Some gnashed their teeth, some laughed to scorn, while



others looked serious and wept. At night we had a very appropriate discourse from Brother Cole, L. P. A few came forward for prayer, four joined the church. I felt much gratified at this my first pastoral visit to Rusk.

April 13th and 14th—After encountering much difficulty by water, mud and quicksand I reached Kennedy's School House, the place of the Quarterly Meeting for Tyler circuit; found old brother Craig, like an old Regular, well disciplined to holy war, at his post—a good congregation in attendance, Quarterly Conference well attended—a most excellent official board, mostly school in the old countries and brought their Methodism with them. Financial reports on the infant circuit good, very good.

After preaching and administering the sacrament on Sabbath, I rode 15 miles to Brother McDough's, in order to reach my next appointment, distant 140 miles, which, owing to high waters and other inconveniences, made me haste to "make hay while the sun shone."

April 21 and 22—Attended the quarterly meeting for Kingsborough circuit, at Smith's chapel. Owing to the constant flood of rain, but little was effected in the form of visible good—but the seed was sown in faith, the result we leave with God.

Monday morning I started for Dallas, but the creeks being impassable I was compelled to return to Brother S's where most of the congregation, who had attended the Quarterly Meeting, still remained owing to rain and high water. I thought it best not to be idle, so I proposed to Brother H, the p. c., that we should have preaching. This we had forenoon and afternoon as it continued to rain.

I started again, found the little creeks lower but the big ones higher. The East Fork of the Trinity, the worst and most dangerous stream in Northern Texas, covering its miserable bottom for two miles. What shall I do? inquired I of the ferryman, and then of the Lord. "Go," said the Lord, "and lo I am with you even to the end of the world."

But the ferryman reluctantly took me over the channel and two or three of the worst sloughs; and then he took a horse and piloted me through the most dangerous parts of the bottom. At our parting I silently offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God, and after compensation and many cheerful thanks to him, I made my way out finding terra firma in about one mile more.



April 27th and 28th—Attended the Dallas Qt. M. at Webb's chapel. This place was dear to me from the recollection that here the first standard of Methodism was planted in this circuit, a few years ago. That time I had the privilege of attending a two days' meeting at this place, when the Lord was pleased to own and bless His word, and the poor preacher felt it a privilege indeed to be among the first to bear the good tidings to the feeble few in the wilderness. They number some 50 members. Our Quarterly meetings were well attended; much good feeling prevailed. One circumstance I was forcibly struck with in the Love Feast. A very pious sister had lately gone to the spirit-land, her name was frequently called and one said, "Sister W—— is here indeed, her sainted spirit seemed to mingle with us. Does not this prove the doctrine of ministering angels?"

May 4th and 5th—Attended two day's meeting at Warsaw.

May 11th and 12th—Attended a Quarterly Meeting at Saline Mission at Gilmore's school house.

Monday, 13th—Home again, after encountering much difficulty by land and water.

It is time to note what progress is being made in the new town of Dallas, mentioned in the presiding elder's ramblings. We have seen that Dallas circuit appears in the minutes as early as 1846. In a memorandum made by Rev. W. C. Young, in connection with some old quarterly conference minutes, he says: "In the minutes of the Quarterly Conference of the circuit Dallas is mentioned as a preaching place on the round of appointments for the years 1848 and 1849, but during these two years there was no organization in the town and no response appearing of record to the Seventh Question—'What has been raised for the support of the Ministry,' until after the 4th Quarterly Conference of 1850, when the first instalment ever recorded was paid to the support of the Methodist Ministry in the town—even \$7."

The minutes of the first quarterly conference, Dallas circuit, for 1848, show the following preaching places, with the financial report from those paying: Honey

Creek Camp Ground; Wm. Pulliam's; Welburn's School House, \$1; Webb's Chapel, \$3.20; Cedar Springs, .75; Dallas; Keen's; Vance's (or Vann's); Russell's; Coone's. Total collected, \$4.95, distributed as follows: "To Bro. J. H. Biggs Traveling Expenses \$1.95; Bro. W. C. Lewis Traveling Expenses, \$2.57; J. H. Biggs Quarterage .43." Biggs was the preacher in charge and Lewis the presiding elder. In the quarterly conference reports for the second, third and fourth quarters of this year Dallas does not appear in the list of preaching places. In the report for the second quarter, 1849, McKinney appears. At the second quarterly conference, 1850, a committee was appointed "to receive propositions to select a suitable place for a parsonage." This committee reported at the third quarter, "accepting 25 acres of ground offered by Abner & M. H. Keen on Duck Creek, in Dallas County," and a committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions and another to superintend the building. Our first record of a "class" in the town of Dallas is the Class Book for the circuit, dated Nov. 11, 1850, showing a Dallas class of twelve names, as follows: Elizabeth Browder, Lucy I. Browder, Perry Deacon, Thomas Cruchfield, S. A. Cruchfield, Sarah Zachre, A. S. Sampson, Isabella P. Harwood, Mary McOmish, A. D. Rice. The Cedar Springs class had forty-four names, among which the Knights, Coles and Brandenburgs are prominent. Webb's Chapel shows fifty-six names, of whom are the Webbs, Cochrans, Armstrongs, Hunts, and Wm. K. Masten, L. P., and Jesse Daniel, L. E.

A full account has already been given of Webb's Chapel, the pioneer church of Dallas County. Four or five years after the Webb's Chapel society was organized a church was formed at Cedar Springs, not far from the present Oak Lawn section of Dallas. Sometime in the middle fifties the Webb's Chapel and Cedar Springs societies united in the erection of a church on half-way ground. This church was named Cochran's Chapel, after

Mrs. Nancy J. Cochran, the donor of the ground.<sup>1</sup> It was dedicated by J. W. P. McKenzie soon after its completion. Cochran's Chapel has had a continuous existence down to the present day and it has made a large contribution to Dallas Methodism and to other fields of the Church. The original building was displaced by another in 1885, and now this one is giving place to a handsome brick church.

We have noted in a former chapter something of the life and character of J. W. P. McKenzie; that he was a pioneer itinerant on both sides of Red River in 1839-40-41, and that on account of failing health he located in the fall of 1841, and settling four miles west of Clarksville, opened a private school for boys in a one-room log house. He enrolled sixteen pupils the first year. This was the beginning of McKenzie College, which for the period before the Civil War came to be the most prosperous and the most influential school west of the Mississippi River. While most of our early schools were projected on a more ambitious scale, and had the advantage of official conference support, the McKenzie school was of slow development and simply grew up around a great educator. Within a few years the log house was displaced by a larger building, and in the course of time four large two-story frame buildings were erected, where as many as three hundred boarding pupils found ample and comfortable quarters. The institution extended its curriculum to a full four year's college course, equal to any of the standards of that day, and a female department was added. "Itinerant's Retreat" was the name which the ex-itinerant gave to his school community, and this spot became classic ground during the life of McKenzie. While McKenzie College was never regularly owned or supported by the conferences or the

<sup>1</sup> The deed to the property was made in 1854, and W. C. Young says that Cochran's Chapel was built the same year the deed was made, and that it was dedicated the same year. He places the cost at \$1400, but says it was not ceiled until later years. Others writing on this subject fix various years for the erection of this church, or of its dedication, as 1856, 1858, or 1859.

Church it was generally recognized as a Methodist institution. One of its distinguishing characteristics was the positive religious influence which it wielded over its pupils. Of this and of other features of its work, as well as of some of the men who were products of the school, we shall have occasion to refer later. Here, to give a contemporary view of some things in its earliest days, we introduce a "statement of account" of one boarding pupil, who, drawn by the fame of the "log college" had ridden all the way from Burleson County on a mule to seek his education.

## 1847. 8&amp;9 Itinerant Retreat.

Rev. O. M. Addison

To J. W. P. McKenzie Dr.

To board & tuition of bro. Malcom 15 months	\$13.00 pr m	.....	\$195.00
" Lights 10.50. gram 1.00. Arith 1.50. quills 20. pap 50		.....	13.75
" quills 20. ink 12½. slate 50. pap 37½. quills, ink 25 Lat			
les 2.50		.....	4.00
" Lat Dic 3.50. pap 50. shoes 2.50. pap 37½. Hist 3.00 Phil 2.00			11.87½
" Soct 50. pap 50 shoes 1.50 geog at 2.00 pap 50 do 50		.....	5.50
" Comb 30. Chemis 125. Lat les 2.50. Caes 3.00 shoes 2.00		...	9.05
" post 20 do .05. do .05. do 10. Sallust 2. 50 post 10. bill at			
Alex 11.50		.....	14.50
" pap 50 key 75 gr 1.00. Lat les 2.50 Virg 4.00 Ment Ph 3.25			12.00
" Will 2.50 Let Dic 5.00 Grk gr. 2.75 slate .50 post 05		....	10.80
" pap 20 sund 4.70		.....	4.80
			281.92½
Cr by horse	\$50.00		125.00
" " Cash	75.00		
	125.00		
		Due	156.92½
		Cr for (illegible)	25.00
			131.92½

## 1848&amp;9 Malcom Addison

To 10 months board & tuition	\$15.00 pr m	.....	\$130.00
" Light 6.50 Cicero 4.50. paper 50. ink 20. quills 20.		.....	12.00
" pencils 20 cash 1.00 pills 1.50. logic 1.75 Rhct 2.50		....	7.00
" pills 25. post 25. post 10. comb 30. pap 50. Gr. Test. 2.50			3.90
" Horace 4.50 post 05 Colb 1.00 Grk Gr 2.75. Grk Lex 10.00			17.30
" (illegible) 2.50. Hym 50 pap 50 pst 10 do 05 shoes 1.75			5.40
" pap 50. comb 37½ pills 1.00 pills 50. post 05 pills 50.			2.92½
" post 15 (2 letters)		.....	.15
			178.67½
			131.92½
			\$310.60
Cr per book 1.50			1.50
			309.10
		cash	1.90
			\$311.00

Summing it all up, the above bill, which may be taken as typical, represents all the expenses in school, covering a total attendance of twenty-five months during the years 1847-48-49, including board, tuition, books, a few items of clothing, "pills" and other sundries, as amounting to \$460.59½, or an average of about \$18.50 a month.

To the above may be added a report of a visit to the institution by the ministerial brother of the student whose account he stood for:

My last was dated from Clarksville, which place I left on Monday the 24th ultimo (letter bears date of Feb. 1, 1848), having spent four days and a half very pleasantly. I am more than ever pleased with bro McKenzie's Institution; and the advantages Malcolm is enjoying. And it is not a stretch of the imagination, to suppose, that the time here spent, will form an era in his history, from which he may date his rise to an honorable distinction in any profession in which he may engage. . . . The students have a debating society which meets weekly. On Friday night, while in the sitting room in company with bros. Stovall and Davis—the latter preacher in charge—we were waited upon by a couple of young gentlemen, who announced themselves as a committee appointed, to invite us into the society. The exercises were in progress as we entered, which consisted in reading compositions previous to the discussion of the subject.

The question read for debate was as follows. "Which is the stronger passion, love or hatred?" This was argued pro and con for sometime, Malcolm closing on the negative. A call was then made for Mr. Addison to participate in the debate. Your humble servant then rose and delivered his sentiments in favor of hatred being the stronger, not that he really thought so; but the other side of the house had the best of the argument, and I thought I would assist the weaker party. The other preachers were invited to speak who respectively presented the merits of the two passions in glowing colors. But love was thought by the deciding power to be much the stronger.

A single extract from a letter from "Malcolm" home, on June 16, 1848, will suffice to close this subject at present:



We have been again visited by the monster death, and under circumstances the most calculated to afflict, on day before yesterday, in the afternoon, William McKenzie (son of Dr. McKenzie) started to a wedding, in company with a number of others, all as gay as it is possible for people to be, but they had not been gone perhaps over five minutes before he was thrown from his horse. his father had went on before to perform the ceremony he was immediately sent for, but William never spoke again. he lived till twenty five minutes after twelve. I need not try to tell you how it affected his parents. . . . Old Master told us some weeks ago that some heavy calamity would fall upon us but this was unexpected to all and more so at the time at which it happened. never have I seen a more sudden change, in about two hours from the time he started, or perhaps a good deal less time, he was brought back insensible and in less than twenty four hours from the time he was perfectly well he was buried. . . . With the exception of that calamity every thing is about as usual, several of the students have professed religion since I last wrote to you. I think that about seven or eight have professed this session.

The second General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in Centenary Church, St. Louis, on May 1, 1850. The representatives from Texas were: from the Texas Conference, Robert Alexander and Chauncey Richardson; from the East Texas Conference, Robert Crawford and William C. Lewis. A letter from Robert Crawford, written en route, and one from Robert Alexander written after the Conference had opened, follow:

We are now on board a S. Boat passing up the River and we are about 30 or 40 miles above Memphis. It will take us about two days yet to get to St. Louis. The Boat shakes so that I can hardly write so that you can read it.

Bro. Lewis and myself and wife came on in company. We took a Boat at Shreveport, and came to New Orleans—— there we fell in with Alexander, Richardson and Peel from your Conference. Also a part of the Alabama Delegation—— We all took a Boat for St. Louis and at Natchez and other points we

fell in with others from Ala. Miss. & La. and we have now on board about 13 Preachers all bound for St. Louis.

There have been 8 or 10 deaths from Cholera since we left N. Orleans on board the boat and there are several more cases that will doubtless die.

The Preachers have all been well during the voyage. . . .

I arrived here the night of the 1st of May but learned on our arrival that a majority of the members were not at their place on the 1st day so nothing was done until we arrived Since the morning of the 2d of May we have been hard at work in the morning from 8½ until 12½ & 1 o'clock then from 3 O P. M. until 5 & 6 &c And I do assure you it is a wearing business these Cholera times and this cold weather for this is a cold region, and we Southern men all have had colds and are coughing & hawing all the time We had Cholera aboard all the way up the river have had & still have that waisting disease in this city though not in a very allarming extent

I presume we will make two new Bps and that Dr. , Bascom will be one of them further than this your deponent doth not say We are about to have plenty of Book depositories and news papers and really I am much in hopes we will get the Banner adopted but it is yet uncertain All of our Bps are present Bp Soule is in feeble health and is excused from effective labors in fact from all labour only such as he may feel that his health will justify We have a large amount of business cut out and more than we will get through soon yet I hope we will not have a long session . . . today we obtained a general conf sanction and recommendation for the Ruter Church and for the agent so I think the thing will go well very well and I doubt not P—— will get \$2.000 for the Washington Church.

Referring to several items mentioned above we find that the General Conference approved the effort to build a church at Washington, Texas, in honor of Dr. Ruter; but beyond recommending the enterprise to the liberality of the community the Conference did not go.

Provision was made for establishing Conference Book Depositories, which resulted in a book supply house later in Texas. The *Texas Wesleyan Banner* was adopted as

one of the papers of the Church, and C. Richardson was elected as editor.

But one bishop was elected at St. Louis—Henry B. Bascom, of Kentucky, whose episcopal career was cut so short that, unlike other new bishops, he did not have the opportunity to be tried out in Texas.

## CHAPTER XIX

### TEXAS CONFERENCE, 1847-1850

THE seventh session of the Texas Conference convened in Galveston, March 10, 1847, Bishop Paine presiding. Chauncey Richardson was elected secretary. George Tittle, David Rose, William J. Wilson, A. B. F. Kerr, Robert N. Stansberry, and Robert H. Belvin were admitted on trial. Isaac Tabor, James H. Collard and Robert B. Wells located. John Haynie took the supernumerary relation. James E. Ferguson was received by transfer from the Arkansas Conference.

The "numbers in society," as reported at this conference, were as follows:

GALVESTON DISTRICT			WASHINGTON DISTRICT		
	Whites	Colored		Whites	Colored
Galveston . . . . .	60	55	Washington Ct. . . . .	253	44
Houston . . . . .	150	82	Montgomery . . . . .	105	9
Brazoria . . . . .	70	54	Huntsville . . . . .	223	7
Richmond . . . . .	116	61	Franklin . . . . .	67	1
San Jacinto . . . . .	112	24	Nashville . . . . .	109	17
Galveston German Mission . . . . .	60	...	Springfield . . . . .	98	1
	574	276		855	82

RUTERSVILLE DISTRICT			RECAPITULATION		
	Whites	Colored		Whites	Colored
Rutersville Ct.....	138	29	Members.....	2045	500
Bastrop.....	125	9	Local preachers.....	39	
Columbus.....	26	1			
Egypt.....	45	25		2084	500
Victoria.....	131	37	Last year.....	1725	501
Gonzales.....	76	11			
San Antonio.....	11	6	Increase.....	359	
Austin.....	43	22	Decrease.....	...	1
Goliad.....	21	2			
	616	142			

This conference was called to mourn the loss of one of its leading members, Daniel N. V. Sullivan, who had died just a few days before the session, while serving as presiding elder of the Washington district. "The committee have been unable to obtain any information respecting the early history and conversion of Daniel V. N. Sullivan," runs his memoir. "It appears from documents found among his papers that he received license as a local preacher in 1833 from the Quarterly Conference in Leeksapilita circuit, Alabama Conference, under the administration of E. V. Levert, P.E. In 1838 he removed to Texas and engaged in teaching school. He was ordained deacon in 1840 by Bishop Waugh; was admitted on trial and appointed to Matagorda circuit. In 1842 he was appointed to Montgomery circuit; in 1843 to Nashville circuit; in 1844 he was ordained elder by Bishop Andrew, and appointed to Brazos circuit; in 1845 to Brazoria; in 1846 he was appointed P.E. of the Washington district, which office he filled at death." In February, 1847, Bro. Sullivan was attacked with what was called inflammation of the brain, and after much acute suffering he died on Saturday, February 20, at the home of Alexander McGowan, in Houston. His memoir



characterizes him as "a deeply devoted christian, but a man of serious and reserved deportment; a minister of a high order of talents, and especially eminent for the clearness with which he stated, and the ability with which he defended and enforced the doctrines of the Bible."

At the Galveston conference no new districts were formed, and no important changes were made in the appointments, except that Josiah W. Whipple was placed on the Washington district, made vacant by the death of D. N. V. Sullivan.

The eighth session of the Texas Conference was held at Cedar Creek<sup>1</sup> a rising young Methodist center in Washington County, convening on December 29, 1847, and closing on January 3, 1848—thus scarcely ten months elapsing since the last conference. Bishop William Capers presided, and Chauncey Richardson was secretary. At this conference Harvey H. Allen, Isaac G. John, Henry Bauer, Charles Goldberg, Thomas M. Williams, and Bryant L. Peel were admitted on trial—two of these, as their names indicate, being the fruitage of our mission to the Germans. Leonard S. Friend, Wm. S. Hamilton and Wiley W. Whitby located. John Haynie and Jesse Hord took the superannuate relation. Oscar M. Addison, who had been admitted on trial into the East Texas Conference the year before, was received by transfer, as was also Lewis S. Marshal from the same conference. William C. Lewis and Isaac M. Williams were transferred to the East Texas Conference.

<sup>1</sup> Thrall and others after him say that this Conference was held at Chappell Hill; but Thrall in his "Reminiscences" does not agree with Thrall the historian. There was no Chappell Hill in 1848, this point taking its rise the following year, if we are to believe the following account in the "Reminiscences": "During my second year on the Washington circuit [which was 1849] there was a camp meeting held at Cedar Creek. . . . During the year Chappell Hill was laid out, and Jacob Haller opened a store. There were many accessions by immigration this year, including Dr. Swearingen, Major Browning and Judge Felder." Concerning the above Conference he says in these papers: "The sessions were held in the second story of Father Chappell's new house, three miles distant from Cedar Creek." Contemporary references to this Conference and to this settlement in 1848 use simply the name "Cedar Creek."

The statistics showed an increase of three hundred and eighty-four white members, and two hundred seventy-nine colored. In the appointments the Washington district is dropped, never to appear again, and the two new districts—Austin and San Antonio—appear; the four districts, with their presiding elders, now being as follows: Galveston district, C. Richardson; Ruttersville district, R. Alexander; Austin district, Josiah W. Whipple; San Antonio district, Mordecai Yell. Galveston station is filled by James M. Wesson; Houston, Robert H. Belvin. A Houston German mission is organized, with Charles Goldberg in charge, and a Houston African mission is set off, with Orceneth Fisher the preacher. The German work in the southwest is included in a Victoria and Indian Point German mission, with Henry Bauer in charge.

The ninth session of the Texas Conference was held at Lagrange, January 3, 1849, Bishop Andrew in charge, C. Richardson, secretary. This was just twelve months to a day from the close of the last conference. Charles F. Rottenstein, James M. Folansbee, Charles Grote, Falacius Reynolds, Reuben Long, and James H. Addison were admitted on trial—six preachers, exactly the same number as at each of the two conferences before. John Haynie and Jesse Hord were continued on the superannuate roll. O. Fisher and Robert B. Wells were transferred to the East Texas Conference, and John C. Kolbe was left without an appointment “on account of pecuniary embarrassment.” John W. Phillips was received by transfer from the Tennessee Conference. The statistics showed an increase of three hundred twenty-one white members and of twelve colored. The financial statistics at the conferences in those days were comprehended under the following questions, with the answers given at this conference:

Question 14, What amounts are necessary for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers,

and to make up the deficiencies of those who have not obtained their regular allowances on the circuits? (Answer) \$1218.41.

Question 15, What has been collected on the foregoing accounts, and how has it been applied? Collected from circuits, \$60.26; at Conference, \$16.45; draft on McFerran and Henkle, \$75; draft on Bishop Soule, \$75. Appropriated; M. R. T. Outlaw, \$50; J. W. DeVilbiss, \$40; David Thompson, \$34.90; R. Alexander, \$21.10; Bp. Andrew, \$75; Conference expense, \$5.71.

Question 16, What has been contributed for the support of Missions, what for the publication of tracts and Sunday school books, and what to the aid of the American Bible Society and its auxiliaries? Missions, \$308; Sunday schools, \$83.35; Bible, \$56.30.

These were the "Conference Collections" of that day—meager enough, compared with the budgets of to-day, but then those were the days of simplicity and but little church machinery. It is to be regretted that there are no salary statistics available except a few examples from old quarterly conference records, as there are no conference journals extant covering that period, and the general minutes put to record only the barest outline of conference transactions.

The tenth session of the Texas Conference was held at Seguin, opening on Dec. 6, 1849. Bishop Robert Paine was in charge, and C. Richardson was again elected secretary. Cyrus Campbell, William F. Hubert, Joshua Shapard, George W. Rabb, William G. Nelms, Edward Schneider, and Dioclesian Wright were admitted on trial. The minutes show that David Thompson, L. D. Bragg and O. Fisher located, although the minutes of the previous session state that Fisher was transferred to the East Texas Conference, which in fact he did. It is only another instance of the imperfection of these records. It is not always possible to trace out an accurate course of a preacher's career through these minutes, as there are examples of a preacher being located one year, and appearing on the superannuated list the following year.

And so on. At this conference M. R. T. Outlaw took the supernumerary relation, and John Haynie and Jesse Hord remain on the superannuated list. Thomas F. Cook transferred to the Texas Conference from the Mississippi Conference. He was a son of Valentine Cook, of great fame in his day as a revivalist.

The statistics show a larger increase in membership than for any previous year—585 white members, and 168 colored. While old Washington has lost its place at the head of a district, the Washington circuit leads the conference in membership—392 white and 112 colored, besides 120 colored gathered in a special Washington colored mission. Ruttersville shows the next highest membership—289 white and 24 colored; followed by Nashville, 244 white, 25 colored; Austin and Bastrop, 247 white and 30 colored (the most of whom are outside of Austin), and Seguin, where the conference was held, which a year or two ago was a frontier settlement, has forged to the front as an appointment, with 232 white members, and 8 colored. The first church building in Seguin had been completed in time for this conference. The “stations” are showing little growth in membership. Galveston has 67 whites and 57 colored; Houston, 103 whites and 114 colored. Austin alone reported the year before 33 white members, and San Antonio has reached a total of only 35 members—20 whites and 15 colored. Corpus Christi brings up six members. The places of “strategic” importance were of slow growth, but were more permanent than the others. The German mission work in the conference reported 169 members, with one church building about completed in Galveston.

In the appointments the Austin district is dropped, and the Springfield district appears, which includes the appointments of Springfield, Wheelock, Nashville, Red Oak and Leon missions. Georgetown mission appears for the first time, included in the San Antonio district, James W. Lloyd, preacher in charge, a transfer from the



Arkansas Conference; and also Brownsville mission, N. A. Cravens, from the Alabama Conference. The districts, with their presiding elders, are: Galveston district, James M. Wesson; Ruttersville district, Robert Alexander; Springfield district, Mordecai Yell; San Antonio district, Josiah W. Whipple; and Victoria district, Daniel Carl. The delegates elected at this conference to the General Conference of 1850 were R. Alexander and C. Richardson.

A running sketch of the progress of the Texas Conference during the above years shows the following facts: The districts have increased from three to five; the membership in the conference has increased by 1649 whites and 458 colored; present total membership, 3374 whites and 959 colored; local preachers have increased from thirty-nine to fifty-nine, and itinerants, actually listed in the appointments, have increased (net) by ten—from thirty-one to forty-one, a small net increase in the itinerant ranks. By no sort of checking up of the minutes can the exact status of the itinerant ranks be determined. The system in operation took no account of accessions by transfer. There was no question, "Who is received by transfer?" New names simply appear in the appointments, and only by sifting the minutes of all the annual conferences can it be even approximately determined where the new preacher came from. And it frequently occurs that a name disappears from the appointments, with no account of what happened in the case.

The minutes of those days take no account of church buildings or parsonages. A United States census report for 1850 shows 328 churches of all denominations in Texas, of which the Methodists owned 173, valued at \$58,195; the Baptists are credited with 70, valued at \$23,190; Presbyterians, 47, valued at \$20,070; Episcopalians, 5, valued at \$15,400; Roman Catholics, 13, valued at \$79,700; "Christians" 5, valued at \$1,500.

The minutes make no record of what we now call



“Educational Statistics,” and our information of the progress of our schools must be gathered from other sources. We know that C. Richardson had resigned the presidency of Rutgersville College, and that he was succeeded by Dr. William Halsey, a native of New York, a graduate of Wesleyan University, who had come to Texas and engaged in teaching in 1845. A brief reference to Rutgersville College contained in a report of the Mission Board for 1847 states that 68 pupils were then in attendance.

Homer S. Thrall, who was sent to the Washington circuit at the conference held in January, 1848, says of that historic ground:

This circuit embraced the section of country in which Mr. Kinney settled and organized his first societies, and that in which Mr. Alexander married and settled. Messrs. Alexander, Kinney, Fisher, Sneed, and Wells, travelling preachers, lived on this circuit; local preachers, Thomas Wooldridge, Thomas R. Nunn, and A. C. Delaplaine; exhorters, B. L. Peel, A. T. Kerr, H. O. Campbell, Cyrus Campbell, and J. C. Harrison. The following were class-leaders: N. Chambliss, E. D. Tarver, Adolphus Hope, James Gray, John Atkinson, and Thomas Bell; stewards, Fletcher W. Hubert, William Dever, William Kesse, J. D. Giddings, William P. Kerr, William Chappell, B. F. Reavill, John M. Brown, Amos Gates, and Rufus E. Campbell. The plan contained 14 appointments, and 254 white and 55 colored members. At the close of Mr. Thrall's second year the circuit was divided and subdivided into several pastoral charges, and Washington Circuit as such disappeared from the Minutes. Before Mr. Thrall took charge of the circuit it had been travelled successively by J. W. Kinney, R. Alexander, Abel Stevens, Jesse Hord, Mr. Kinney again with R. B. Wells, Joseph P. Sneed, and William C. Lewis. At that early period the necessity for houses of worship was as great as at the present time, and in many places cheap structures were built, so that we could have our own denominational Sunday schools. A plain church was erected at a neighborhood called Cedar Creek, in Washington County, in 1847. Soon afterward the village of Chappell Hill was laid

out and a church erected there. . . . Soon afterward churches were built at Brenham, Bastrop, and La Grange.

The years 1847-49 mark the rise of Methodism at San Marcos. According to the version of a surviving member of that church<sup>2</sup> the following is the story: "In 1847 my father moved from Grimes County to the spot upon which San Marcos is built. There was no house here then, but Gen. Henry McCullough with a company of Rangers was camped here. Indians were occasionally around here at that time. A few months after our arrival my father, Jno. D. Pitts, got in touch with Rev. A. B. F. Kerr, our former pastor, and got him to come here and preach to the few who had formed a settlement. In August, 1847, Bro. Kerr organized the church. The meeting was in our house, and nine persons constituted the charter roll. Besides my father, mother, brother and myself, there were Ed Pitts, Wm. C. Pitts and wife, Thos. McGehee and wife and Mike Sessums. Services were held at intervals in our home until 1849, when the first church was built."

We have noted the projection of the Springfield district in 1849, which was the seed germ of the future Northwest Texas Conference. Springfield, in the heart of Limestone County, first appears in the minutes of 1846, and returns at the end of the year 98 white members and 1 colored. Richland, in Navarro County, with Jas. E. Ferguson and Jas. G. Hardin, in charge, appears in 1847, and for this mission at the end of the year 162 white members and 2 colored are returned.

Although Denton County was, according to the official boundary, properly in the territory of the East Texas Conference, as the Trinity River was the line, preachers from the Texas Conference first pushed northward into this region and planted Methodism there. Two accounts

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Eliza Malone, now past ninety years of age, quoted in article T. C. A., 1920.

of Methodist beginnings in Denton County which we have seen are not in exact agreement, and a third account, which we are about to offer, does not agree with the others, though all have some points in common. In a lengthy account of Methodism in Denton and Denton County, appearing in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1918, we are told that "Denton County was attached to and became a part of Red Oak Mission, and in July, 1846, Rev. J. E. Ferguson, presiding elder of the Austin District, and in charge of Red Oak Mission, organized a church near where the town of Lewisville now is, with nineteen members." Another account, from Bates's "History of Denton County," is as follows, the statement having been prepared by the son of John W. King mentioned: "The first Methodist class in Denton County was formed in July, 1846, by James E. Ferguson, presiding elder of the Red Oak Mission. John W. King was class leader." The names of the members included the Harmonsons, Kings, Waggoners, Suttons and others, to the number of nineteen. We are told further: "The class met regularly, had monthly meetings from 1846 to 1852. . . . The preachers in charge were as follows: Rev. James E. Ferguson in 1846-47, Rev. George Tittle in 1848, Rev. Randalls, a native Texas preacher, in 1849."

In the above accounts, the first probably derived from the second, some matters are badly mixed. The conference records show that James E. Ferguson did not come to Texas until the winter of 1846-47, transferring from the Arkansas Conference. The Texas Conference, at which he received his first appointment in Texas, was held in March, 1847, at which time he was appointed, with a colleague, J. G. Hardin, to the Richland circuit, Navarro County. Josiah Whipple was presiding elder of the Austin district that year, and not Ferguson, as stated above; and the Red Oak Mission, referred to as existing in 1846, was not created until 1848. That Ferguson visited Denton County in 1847, and left a church organ-

ization there, we are certain, from his own account; and that he had been preceded there a year before by another preacher, Wiley W. Whitby, we are told also. Ferguson's account is as follows:<sup>3</sup>

In 1847 the territory now embraced in Navarro, Ellis, Tarrant, and a part of Limestone, Dallas and Denton counties, was served by a young man of twenty-two summers. It was his third year in the ministry and first in Texas. The country was newly settled by a hardy, hospitable class. He met a kind reception among the people, and found them kindly disposed toward religion. The highest point visited by my predecessor, Rev. W. W. Whitby, was in Denton county, called "Harmonson's School House." While at this point in the month of August I received a message from Mr. John Waggoner, living on Elm Fork of the Trinity, twelve miles distant, requesting an appointment at his house. The appointment was made for the following Sunday at 4 p. m. I found about 25 persons present. I gave out a two days meeting in September at the house of Peter Waggoner, brother of John. In the early part of the week in which the two days meeting had been set the missionary passed through the settlement on his way to preach at Fitzhugh's Station 18 miles further up on Elm Fork. . . . The second Saturday in September I began the meeting at Peter Waggoner's. A Mrs. Sutton was gloriously converted, and died before the end of the year in great joy. Another man King, an ex-Campbellite preacher in Missouri, after a hard struggle was converted, with his wife and three daughters. Over 20 joined the church. This man King was left as class-leader.

While the above piece of historical reminiscence is unsigned, the description which the writer gives of himself corresponds exactly with Ferguson's age and ministerial career.

Red Oak mission (Red Oak being in Ellis County) was created in 1848, and George Tittle appointed to the charge. This fact leads us to the beginning of Methodism in Waxahachie. In a historical sketch of the Waxahachie Methodist Church<sup>4</sup> we have the following: "The first

<sup>3</sup> From the T. C. A., 1857.

<sup>4</sup> Journal Central Texas Conference, 1916.



sermon preached in what is now Waxahachie was in 1848 by George Tittle, who was preacher in charge of Red Oak Mission. On one occasion he lost his way on the prairie, and stopping at the cabin of Major E. W. Rogers to make inquiry, he was invited to spend the night and preach. That cabin occupied the ground where the Hotel Rogers now stands. In the spring of 1849 Rev. Mr. Reynolds organized a Methodist Society, consisting of nine members, in Major Rogers' cabin. This was one year before the town of Waxahachie was located."

Continuing our search of the minutes, Red Oak Mission returned at the end of the year 74 white members and one colored. In the fall of 1848 Falacious Reynolds was appointed to Red Oak Mission, and in the following year Springfield district appears, covering this territory, with the following appointments: Mordecai Yell, P.E.; Springfield ct., Fabricius Reynolds (his name never appears the same way twice); Wheelock, Reuben Long; Nashville, John W. DeVilbiss; Red Oak Mission, D. F. Wright, Wm. G. Nelms; Leon Mission, James H. Addison. Georgetown Mission, as we have noted, appears for the first time this year, but is included in the San Antonio district.

The following report from the new settlement of Waxahachie, and noting the projection of its first church, signed D. W. Wright, and dated Red Oak circuit, July 15, 1850, appeared in the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*:

Waxahachie, the county site of Ellis county, Texas, is pleasantly situated on the north side of Waxahachie creek, on the road leading from Dallas to Austin, about thirty miles from Dallas, and about eighteen miles west of the Trinity river, surrounded by a country of rich, undulating land, and from its central position, the intelligence and moral worth of the citizens in and around the town, it bids fair to become a pleasant and thriving inland town.

Here we have a little band of generous Methodists, who, aided by their generous neighbors, are taking steps preparatory to the



erection of a church. Brother E. W. Rogers has donated a lot for the purpose of a church and parsonage. Our plan for raising funds to build said church, is by subscription, and already quite a number of names appear.

This is followed by a subscription list amounting to \$330, headed by E. W. Rogers, \$50, and on which appears the name of Gen. E. H. Tarrant, \$30. This first building was located on what was later called East Franklin Street. It was a building 16 by 20 feet, constructed of clapboards, and was completed and occupied in 1852.

Extracts from the same church paper—the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*—for the same year give us the beginnings of two other future important points. The first is from James W. Lloyd, P.C., on the new Georgetown mission, two items, dated October 3 and November 10 respectively:

Our meeting commenced on the 27th of September, and under somewhat unfavorable circumstances, but we were not discouraged. The ministers and the Church put their trust in Him, who never deceives his faithful followers, and went to work with all their energy. The result was one conversion on the first night of the meeting. The meeting progressed with interest, notwithstanding we had a severe blow from the North on Saturday night, which broke up our services, turning over our tents, and exposing us to the dripping clouds; but the Lord was with us, and amidst the roar of the storm you might hear the songs of Zion from the neighboring wagons and vehickles. And ere our meeting closed, which was Monday, we numbered seventeen conversions and as many accessions to the M. E. Church, South. And the members of the Church were much revived and strengthened in faith and doctrine. Our prayer to the great Head of the Church is, that the revival may extend all around the Mission, and throughout the borders of our Israel. Pray for us, dear brother, while we labor in the frontier part of our territory.

J. W. Whipple, the P. E., A. B. F. Kerr, and James E. Ferguson, also the local preachers on the Mission, John T. Cox,

Charles C. Cook, Noah McCuistion and Thomas F. Windsor, were with us, and labored faithfully in word and doctrine.

Suffer me through your columns to make a meagre report from the Georgetown Mission. When I was appointed to the work there were about forty members in full connection, and about twenty on probation. We dropped six of the probationers, and gave letters to two of the members, which left fifty-two in all, scattered over a territory comprising two counties. There have been twenty-five members received on probation, and 38 by letter, making in the bounds of the Mission 115 communicants; out of which there are four local preachers and two exhorters.

And this from N. A. Cravens, at the far-away post of Brownsville, under date of May 15, 1850:

It may afford your readers pleasure to learn that, since my arrival at Brownsville, the field assigned me as the field of my ministerial labors for the present Conference year, we have succeeded in building a church edifice, sufficient for our congregation. I arrived here 27th of February, and found Brother Chamberlain, a minister of the Presbyterian church, had preceded me about five weeks, and he had secured the use of Brother Stansbury's School house, the only suitable house for religious worship at that time in our city, except a house then occupied by the Catholics; so that there was no chance for me to enter efficiently upon the discharge of my ministerial duties until we could build; in this state of things time was valuable, and to work we went; and the result is a building 60 feet long, 20 feet wide, ten feet cut off for bed room and study for the preacher. Our house is canvassed inside and overhead, and a set of good seats, suitable pulpit, and yellow-washed outside, paled in, and the palings white-washed; the floor of the preacher's room carpeted with oil canvas, and suitable furniture for comfort of preacher. Last Sunday the house was solemnly dedicated to the service of God.

In the absence of any other preacher for our church, it became my duty to preach on the occasion; Brother Chamberlain, by special invitation, assisted in the services, following the ser-

vices with appropriate and eloquent remarks, and a very solemn dedicatory ceremony, after which a subscription, amounting to nearly one hundred dollars was raised to help in defraying the expenses of the building.

This you are aware is the first church built in the valley of the Rio Grande since the Mexican War. The only Protestant church on this whole frontier. May God make it a great blessing to the city and the country adjacent to it.

The *Texas Wesleyan Banner*, from which the foregoing extracts have been taken, was a new thing in Texas Methodism, and as it came into existence during the period we are now considering, an account of its origin is here in place.<sup>5</sup> In 1847 Robert B. Wells, a son-in-law of Orceneth Fisher, located and settled in Brenham, and commenced the publication of a paper which he named *The Texas Christian Advocate and Brenham Advertiser*. Having had some previous experience in the printing business, Mr. Wells was encouraged to undertake the establishment of a church paper by such men as Fisher, Richardson, Kenney, Thrall, Whipple, and Yell, and a few citizens of Brenham, notably Col. J. D. Giddings and others, subscribed liberally toward the expenses of the paper. As a consequence the paper began with a dual name and a dual character—half church and half secular. The editor was assisted in getting out the paper by his wife, Mrs. Mary E. Wells, a daughter of Orceneth Fisher, a sister of O. A. Fisher and an aunt of Sterling Fisher—the last two later of the West Texas Conference—and Mrs. Wells recounts some of the difficulties which finally defeated the enterprise. The citizens of Brenham were all liberal supporters of the paper, “but,” says she, “when we came to the work, and tried to get printers to set type and hands to work off the papers we were at a loss to know what to do—a long ways from market, and

<sup>5</sup> The account is derived from an article on C. Richardson, by H. S. Thrall, in T. C. A., 1877, supplemented by a letter from the widow of R. B. Wells, in T. C. A., 1904.

news of interest was scarce. The editor was a good printer and good manager, and also a hustler, for he worked night and day on the paper, and had it ready on time. His wife made up the mail with very little help. Houston was our nearest market, and in rainy weather the road was almost impassable. We would have trouble with our press, and it was hard to get paper. We soon found that Brenham was not the place for the *Advocate*—there were too many difficulties to overcome, there being no conveniences at hand, it was such an uphill business. But we struggled on until the end of the year, when its managers decided to move to Houston, where there were more conveniences. Then the Rev. O. Fisher, D.D., took charge, Rev. R. B. Wells returning to traveling and preaching.”

The paper, now called simply *The Texas Christian Advocate*, was conducted as a private enterprise in Houston by O. Fisher until the fall of 1848. At a consultation of preachers and laymen, held at the Rutersville campground in September of that year, it was determined to take over the paper and carry it on as a church periodical. A committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements, and at the request of the committee H. S. Thrall prepared a “prospectus,” which appeared in the *Houston Telegraph* of October 12. At the succeeding conference, held at Lagrange, the enterprise was approved, and C. Richardson was elected editor. The new editor, on his own motion, changed the name of the paper to *Texas Wesleyan Banner*. In February, 1849, Messrs. Alexander and Thrall took a horseback ride from Washington County to Houston, and on behalf of the publication committee of the conference, they entered into a contract with Messrs. Cougen and Moore, by which the latter were “to furnish everything and deliver to the editor weekly one thousand copies of papers of imperial size, at \$2,500 per annum. It was expected that the subscriptions would pay the printers, and the advertisements

the editor," whose salary had been fixed at \$800 a year. In due time the *Banner* was unfurled, beautiful in appearance, and in size equal to any paper in the state. It was popular both with preachers and people. The East Texas Conference adopted the paper, and appointed a committee to act jointly with a committee from the Texas Conference; and in 1850 the General Conference gave it official recognition. We shall leave the *Banner* floating in the Texas breezes for the present, simply adding with reference to the story so hopefully begun—"to be continued."

In 1847-48 no little disturbance was created in church circles in Houston and elsewhere by the defection of Gen. Moseley Baker, a local preacher and a man of prominence and influence, who had been a captain in the Texan army at San Jacinto, and a member of Congress. An extract from a letter, dated Houston, May 4, 1848, gives some account of the origin and course of the trouble:<sup>6</sup>

In my last I informed you Gen. Baker had withdrawn from the church. This has not much surprised me, as I knew he was not altogether satisfied in our church. . . . I am now at Gen. Baker's, who is my host during this visit to Houston. There is an old man here named Alley, who has (or professes to have) received great spiritual light. He has been sanctified, and enjoys a state of holiness higher than this blessing. He contends the Millenium commenced from the year "40," and that Christ has now come the second time. From scripture he says that there was to be a night of darkness or a dark age previous to the Millenium, in which we were not to be able to enjoy much spiritual light; but now Christ has come the second time, there is a state of glory to be enjoyed by the church she has never before known. All sectarian feelings are to be done away with and the followers of Christ are to be united. This he is commanded to preach, &c &c. Now bro. Baker professes to have received great spiritual light, and receives the preaching of

<sup>6</sup> Letter of O. M. Addison, then on New Washington Mission, to his mother.



Mr. Alley as from God. This may have had some influence in his withdrawal from the church. He says he is happy, and would not join again for the world.

Gen. Baker, whose strange doctrines seemed to be partly derived from this man Alley, who was described as "a shrewd Yankee from the North," and partly consisted of the new fads of mesmerism and spiritualism, began the publication of *The True Evangelist*, through which he disseminated his railing accusations against the Church. A heated controversy was kept up for some time between the *Evangelist* and *The Texas Wesleyan Banner*. The name "Bakerites" came to be applied to the readers of the *Evangelist*; however, but few persons followed the General's example in withdrawing from the Church, and in the course of a year or two the excitement subsided. Gen. Baker died of yellow fever in the latter part of 1848.

A few further extracts from the letters and journals of various preachers may be used as reflecting conditions here and there within the wide bounds of the Texas Conference during the period 1847-50. The following paragraphs are from letters from William Young, San Antonio, dated at different times in 1848:

I have now been here about four months, and truly I can say I have been blessed in a very peculiar manner. I have never met with a more kind reception anywhere than in this place. It is true we have not a great many members of the church, but our citizens generally are friendly to the cause of religion, our congregations are large and attentive, and where these marks are exhibited there is hope of doing good. We stand very much in need of a few more members to aid us in carrying out our purposs, and if you felt dispose to move from where you are now settled I think you might do very well here, we certainly have a much more healthy climate than any of the Brazos country the coolest water and the purest air that can be found in Texas I suppose and if you and brother Joseph were settled here and disposed to follow your occupation as mechanicks I

think you might do very well our people are very much in the spirit of building and good workmen who do their business properly are very scarce. . . .

I spoke of the kindness and attention of this people to religion and ministers of the gospel but at the same time it needful to remark that there is a great deal of wickedness amongst a portion of our community and we have a great many opposite influences to contend with, but what else could we expect under the circumstances. It is now the rendezvous for a portion of the army and where ever soldiers are embodied wickedness will prevail to some extent—— Col. Hays of the Texas rangers arrived here this after-noon and they are now greeting him with a round of artillery so you see I spoil a word sometimes by jumping at roar of that awful gun.

We have been getting along peaceibly most of the time since I last wrote, an attempt however was made on last saturday to kill me off, and I consider that I made quite a fortunate escape, but bro. McCullough our Presbyterian minister escaped still more narrowly than I did. A gambling fellow by the name of Glanton, who had some difficulty with bro. M. about a church lot came on his horse, drunk, and attacked our house he first rode into my room and presented a large six shooter at me but I jumped out of his way and he did not fire, he then rode out and stood before Mc's door and as he opened it he fired, the bullet passing through his hat, he shut the door when he fired again the ball passing the second time through his hat, he then rode arround and fired at the window and broke it with his pistol firing again, and after which he came to my room, and fired at me but did no damage, for I did not stay to see it. He was arrested and bound over to court. This is taking things by storm. We are not doing much at present in the white congregation but there is a deep interest among the colored people. Our conference year is drawing to a close, and we have not seen any fruits of our labors worth naming yet, and can you wander at it in such a state of things as we have here? It would take something extraordinary to affect much of a change for the better here.

The next letter is given almost entire, as it reflects certain characteristics of the writer, James E. Ferguson.

Ferguson was born in Alabama in 1824; removed to Arkansas in 1835, and entered the Arkansas Conference in 1844. In 1847 he was transferred to the Texas Conference and appointed to Richland circuit, as we have noted before. In 1848 he was on Nashville mission. He subsequently filled some of the leading stations in the conference, and was said to have been a man "of much force of character, and decidedly original in his manner of administering the affairs of a station." Following is the letter:

Waugh Camp ground, Texas, Oct 19th 48'

Dear brother Addison.

Yours of the 13th ultimo was received on last evening, and read with pleasure by your friend Jimmy. I expect that your letter has been some time in the office as I have been absent for some time on a trip with bro Whipple on a Campaign of Camp-meetings, and a few items in relation to the trip will be the most interesting topic that I have on hand. The first meeting that we attended was near Dallas on Bro Tittle work. There was a heavy norther down upon us all the time of the meeting, and sin and the cold so froze up the people's hearts that little good was done in comparison to some others. There were only three conversions, but quite a time with the church. from that meeting I whent to see my brother in Kaufman Co found he and family well. From thence I whent to Bro Rose's meeting at which place we had a fine meeting. 20 converts and near as many accessions—at which place I met the *Cicero* of the Eastern Conf—Bro *Davis*. He is truly eloquent, but not that kind that warms the heart, but fills the *head* with many grand ideas. You would all ways hear him with more pleasure than profit, while he is preaching you are in a continual blast, but when done there's not a trace behind. He is very companionable and has marks of piety. Bro ——— did not marry the Lady I heard he did. Would to God he had. He has got a woman—I fear not a wife—Her character epitomized stands thus, she has neither wealth nor beauty nor sense, and as to her broughten up she didn't have any. She is not religious without she has been converted since I left. . . . At Wheelock we had a splendid

meeting 38 joined the church. the conversions we estimated at 30 or 40 I know that there was a great many, and enough fuss on Monday night to have made the walls of Jericho fall. And today my Campmeeting commences. It is now four oclock P. M. Thursday and the tents are all occupied, and I am all the preacher on the ground. More anon—— Oct 24th. The Campmeeting is now over. We had Bros Whipple, Snead, Rottenstein, Tittle, Wooldridge, J. H. Addison and your humble Servant. I am certain we had ten conversions—we had many mourners, and had not the rain come down on Saturady night and Sunday we would have had a good meeting. Bro Whipple's wife is very low and he left us on Sabbath evening. Bro *Snead* immortalized himself on Monday. My humble self reminded him of a *Black leg gambler*. The Baptist were Sheep Thieves & c & c——

I have nothing more to say in relation to meetings more than I am now on my way to one on the Colorado. . . . I can say to you that I have more religion than usual. I feel a fresh call to the ministry. May the good Lord bless you abundantly is the prayer of your brother

J. E. FERGUSON

Rev'd O. M. Addison

Since a son of J. E. Ferguson—and of the same name—afterwards became governor of Texas, it is interesting to have the elder Ferguson's observations on the retirement of one governor and the inauguration of another, the following description of the event being contained in a letter, dated Jan. 29, 1850, written after a visit to Austin:

Brother Phillips and I visited Austin, and was present at the Inauguration of Gov Bell. In my humble judgment the Ex, & Elect, Governors made poor speeches. I will tell you what Wood put me in mind of Bro Snead trying to be eloquent, or at least very interesting. He drank water, spit and Pawed and with all his awkwardness he was cheered, huzzahed, as if a thunderstorm of Eloquence was pouring like a burning river of fire. Bell read his speech, in a dry, solo style and stop occasionally to wet his whistle. He also was cheered at a round rate.

I am of the opinion, if any of our preachers were to go to Austin and make as stumbling an out that half of the congregation would leave the house in high dudgeon. Bro Phillips acted as Chaplain, and did his part well.

Forbearing the use of numerous other letters, which might extend this chapter indefinitely, a few words covering episcopal labors in Texas during this period may well close this section. Bishop Paine, a new accession to the episcopal "bench"—as the order was then called—held the Texas Conferences in the winter of 1846-47; Bishop Capers, another recently elected bishop, was in charge in 1847-48; Bishop Andrew in 1848-49, and Bishop Paine again in 1849-50. Of the long journeys made to and from the far southwest, traveling by steamboat, stage and on horseback, and usually in mid-winter, Bishops Andrew and Paine wrote interesting accounts for the church press, and also in letters home, extracts from which are given in the "Life" of each.<sup>7</sup> Bishop Andrew had been in Texas five years before, and he notes many changes; among them the wide sweep of country now occupied by the Church in Texas. He gives it as his opinion that the Texas Conference would soon be extended to embrace the "provinces of Mexico." The missionary problems of the country—the Mexicans, the negroes and the Germans—and the want of workers, brought forth extended observations. "There are too many men in the East, many standing about the market places idle," he says, "and too few in the West." The Germans, coming in such large numbers, and settling so often in colonies, bringing with them their own pastors or priests, and retaining their own language and customs, constituted a hard missionary problem, and under such conditions they would sooner or later become a political problem.

<sup>7</sup> Life and Letters of James Osgood Andrew, by G. G. Smith, and Life of Bishop Paine, by R. H. Rivers. Also "Miscellanies," by Andrew.



Bishop Paine reports that, while at Fort Smith, Ark., while on his way from the Indian Mission Conference, he saw *thousands* moving to Texas. "Wagons, wagons were crowded along the banks of the river"—all headed for Texas. Bishop Paine entered Texas for the first time at Galveston, in March, 1847, en route to the seat of the Texas Conference, at Cedar Creek, Washington County. The Bishop's account of one stage of this journey, given several years later,<sup>8</sup> is as follows:

In one of my trips to Texas to hold the conference we had to ride on horseback several days from Houston. Quite a number of us made the trip together, and we had a merry and pleasant party. One morning when we got up it was warm and pleasant, but a blue haze lay to the northwest, and the knowing ones among us prophesied a "Norther." Along toward noon, the norther, a wet one, struck us. It was a fearful wind from the north, with a driving mist in our faces. The temperature dropped almost instantly from summer to winter. The sun was blotted out, and it was indeed a blue and disagreeable day. Overcoats were soon put on, and the most of us were reasonably comfortable. Some though had insufficient wraps, and suffered considerably.

After a rather cheerless lunch we rode on north. The piercing wind driving the cold mist to the very bones, grew in force as the afternoon wore on. About three o'clock a young man rode up beside me. He had no overcoat or shawl, and was indeed thinly clad. His teeth were chattering, and his face looked blue and bloodless.

"Bishop," he said, "I honestly believe I am freezing."

I said, "Why, my brother, turn your horse around, and ride as hard as you can back to the last house we passed. You will have your back to this wind, and can get back all right."

"But, Bishop, I am going up to enter Conference, and the committees I understand are exacting, and if I come in a day or so late I don't know whether they will give me an examination."

"You go right back and I will be answerable for all the consequences. Go at once."

<sup>8</sup> Reported by Jno. R. Allen, Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly.

And he did. About three days later he came in, and I was as good as my word.

Well, we rode on, getting colder and colder. It was near midnight when we reached the settlement we were making for. It was just a one room log hut in a clump of timber. The frontiersman was very kind. He invited us into his house, where there was a good fire in an old fashioned fire-place. We had to hitch our horses to the trees, without food of any kind. In the one room there were two beds, one occupied by our host and his wife, and the other by his mother-in-law. There was nothing for the rest of us but the dirt floor. We soon had made a pallet, and stretched out side by side, covering with our shawls, overcoats, etc. It was warm in the house out of the wind, and when we lay down I asked for the outside place, which was readily granted. I fell promptly to sleep, but woke up after awhile exceedingly cold. The fire had died down, and the wind was coming in through a huge crack under the door. Covering up the best I could, and getting as much warmth from the next brother as possible, I again fell into a troubled sleep. After awhile I again woke, but was warm and comfortable. For a moment I could not understand it, but turning over I found that a large dog had crept through the crack under the door, and had curled up just at my back. I patted him on the head and said, "Good doggie, you stay here." And he did, and I got a good sleep until things were stirring next morning.

On a subsequent trip to Texas, in 1849, Bishop Paine entered from the north, and having held the East Texas Conference at Paris, he had before him then a horseback journey of more than three hundred and fifty miles, to the seat of the Texas Conference at Seguin. Andrew Davis accompanied him on a part of the journey, when J. W. Whipple met the party and conducted the bishop to Austin. An instance of the bishop's "entertainment" on the route is given by Davis. While staying overnight at a certain place, supper was called, and the bishop and company sat down to a dish of bacon and peas. On casting his eyes about a little the bishop saw that his supply of needful instruments for managing the peas was very

limited, as he had nothing but a pegging awl. So after taking in the condition of things he determined to make the best of the situation, and without a word started in after his peas with the awl. His companion, sitting near at hand, seeing the bishop's plight, quietly slipped him the half of knife which he had found at his plate—about half of the blade had been broken off—and although the knife had been seriously damaged, it served better for handling peas than a pegging awl, and the bishop graciously accepted the favor.

On this long and arduous journey Bishop Paine was taken violently ill. A physician was called, who prescribed enormous doses of calomel, blue-mass and quinine, twenty grains of calomel at night, and ten grains of quinine every few hours during the day. Although so sick that he thought again and again that death would be the result, the bishop pushed on, because he found no place at which he could stay. At length tired, sick and wasted, he reached Austin, where Chauncey Richardson and Robert Alexander, friends of other days, had come to meet him, and where he could rest and receive proper attention. He reached the conference at Seguin late, and was scarcely able to travel at its close. But he proceeded on horseback to Houston. "Arriving at Mobile on January 1, 1850," says his biographer, "he heard from his wife for the first time since leaving home in September. Amid all his labors, dangers, sufferings, his heart had not been gladdened by one line from the loved ones at home—so uncertain were the mails in what we then called the Far West."

## CHAPTER XX

### THE YEARS 1850-1852

THE East Texas Conference met at Palestine, November 27, 1850. Bishop Henry B. Bascom, after his election at St. Louis in May, 1850, had been assigned to the Western District, to include the Missouri, Arkansas, Indian Mission and East Texas Conferences; but within less than four months after his elevation to the episcopacy Bascom was in his grave. He held but one conference—the St. Louis, at Independence, Mo., July 10th, from which he returned home sick. He died on September 8. The East Texas Conference was left without episcopal supervision for the remainder of the year. Samuel A. Williams was elected to preside at the Palestine session, and John W. Fields was chosen secretary.

The conference held its sessions in a new Methodist church, just completed, at Palestine, and in memory of the deceased bishop was named Bascom Chapel. On Sunday morning, December 1, after a sermon by Dr. O. Fisher, the house was dedicated. "After the sermon" says an account in the *Texas Wesleyan Banner* of that day, "a collection of \$135 was taken up to finish paying the debt due against the church; also \$21.80 to finish paying for the bell; also \$36 to paint the house. Total \$192.80."

In the same report of the conference we learn that the Missionary anniversary was held on Saturday evening. The speakers were O. Fisher and S. A. Williams. The collection amounted to \$147.75, besides 325 acres of land, donated by J. S. Tanner to the children of Daniel Poe, a deceased preacher of the conference.

At this conference the following were admitted on trial: Wm. C. Guigley, Joseph McMillan, John Poe, Edward F. Thwing, Acton Young, William E. George, William K. Masten. F. M. Stovall located; Robert Crawford and E. P. Chisholm took the supernumerary relation, and Geo. West is the sole name on the superannuated roll. In answer to the question, "Who have died this year," is the brief answer, "Andrew J. Harris died in great peace." John Powell transferred to this conference from the Louisiana Conference, and William C. Lewis and Francis Wilson transferred back to the Texas Conference. The minutes state simply that Isaac M. Williams was "left without appointment"; but from Fields' journal we are informed that Williams was under charges of immorality at conference, and that he was finally expelled.

The following are the appointments made at this conference:

San Augustine District—

S. A. Williams, P. E.

San Augustine Circuit, J. W. Shipman,

Shelbyville, John Poe,

Panola, Wm. Craig,

Henderson, Jesse L. Daniel,

Jasper, Hugh B. Hamilton.

Marshall District—

Aiken N. Ross, P. E.

Marshall and Jefferson, Robt. B. Wells,

Dangerfield, W. K. Masten, Robt. Crawford, Supny.

Mt. Pleasant, Sam'l Lynch,

Gilmer, P. W. Hobbs,

Wood County Miss., S. G. Culver,

Harrison County Af. Miss., Wm. Jamieson.

Clarksville District—

H. W. Burkes, P. E.

Clarksville, John B. Tullis,

Boston, M. F. Cole,



Paris, Edward F. Thwing,  
Bonham, F. G. Fawcett,  
Grayson, Wm. C. Guigley,  
Greenville, Calvin Askins.

Palestine District—

J. T. P. Irvine, P. E.  
Palestine, John W. Fields,  
Cherokee, Wm. K. Wilson,  
Kaufman, John McMillan, E. P. Chisholm, Supny.  
Dallas, Jas. G. Hardin,  
Athens Miss., Wm. E. George.

Nacogdoches District—

Oreeneth Fisher, P. E.  
Nacogdoches Ct., John C. Woolam,  
Crockett, John Powell,  
Lexington, Jefferson Shook,  
Woodville, Acton Young,  
Liberty, Andrew Cumming,  
Beaumont, William P. Sansom,  
Marion, Sam'l C. Box.

The eleventh session of the Texas Conference was held at Richmond from December 11 to 16, 1850, with Bishop Andrew presiding, and Chauncey Richardson as secretary. Ulyses Salis, Thaddeus O. Kidd, Lewis B. Whipple, Simon B. Cameron, Chas. W. Thomas and Joseph Derrhammer were admitted on trial. Lewis B. Whipple was a brother of J. W. Whipple, already a leading member of the conference; S. B. Cameron had formerly been in connection with a conference in Kentucky; Chas. W. Thomas, it will be remembered, was one of the first teachers in Rutgersville College; "Joseph H. Derrhammer," says a report in the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*, "formerly a Roman Catholic priest, took upon himself our ordination vows as an elder, without the imposition of hands." M. R. T. Outlaw and R. H. Belvin located, and John Haynie and Jesse Hord remain on the superannuate roll.

In answer to the question, "Who have died this year?" appears the name of David L. Bell, and the following obituary is given:

David L. Bell was a native of Kentucky. His father was a Baptist minister. In the year 1841 he was brought to the knowledge of God under the ministry of Rev. J. M. Steel. He was admitted into the Arkansas Conference in 1842; ordained deacon in 1844, and transferred to the Texas Conference. Here from pecuniary embarrassment he was compelled to locate. But his heart was still in the work of the ministry. He was resolved to re-enter it at the earliest possible period. By diligence and industry he succeeded in relieving himself of his difficulties, and at the Conference of 1849 presented himself for readmission. From the Conference he returned home to prepare for his new field of labor (which was Victoria circuit), but Providence ordered otherwise. His days were numbered, and his public labors ended. He was quite unwell when he reached home, and his disease (pneumonia) grew worse until on the 25th of January, 1850, he ceased from suffering and toil, and entered into an immortality of rest and recompense. One who knew him well, and was with him during his sickness, says: "I had several interviews with him during the first days of his sickness, in all of which he spoke as one determined on the accomplishment of a great enterprise. . . . With this sainted brother it was my happy lot to be associated for some three years on this Western Frontier. I have known his public walks and private ways, in prosperity and adversity, in times of plenty and scarcity, in calm and storm, in safety and in peril. . . . In every relation, I have known him to be an agreeable companion, a gentleman, a dauntless Soldier of the Cross, a conscientious Christian, and a faithful minister."

The following are the appointments made at this conference:

Galveston District—

James M. Wesson, P. E.

Galveston, Homer S. Thrall,

Galveston German Miss., U. Salis,

Houston, Simon B. Cameron,  
Houston German Miss., to be supplied,  
Brazoria, John W. Phillips, Thaddeus O. Kidd,  
San Jacinto, to be supplied,  
Richmond, O. M. Addison,  
Matagorda, Chas. F. Rottenstein.

Rutersville District—

R. Alexander, P. E.  
Rutersville, Wm. S. Hamilton,  
Washington, Wm. C. Lewis,  
Washington & Rock Island, I. G. John,  
Montgomery, A. B. F. Kerr, G. W. Rabb,  
Huntsville, Geo. Rottenstein,  
Mill Creek, Wm. F. Hubert, Joseph Derrhammer.

Springfield District—

M. Yell, P. E.  
Wheelock, W. G. Nelms,  
Springfield, P. M. Yell,  
Nashville, J. W. DeVilbiss,  
Red Oak, D. W. Wright,  
Waxahachie Miss., J. W. Lloyd,  
Leon, Geo. W. Tittle.

Victoria District—

D. Carl, P. E.  
Victoria, B. L. Peel,  
Victoria German Miss., Edward Snider,  
Goliad, Reuben Long,  
Gonzales, Thos. F. Cook,  
Texana, C. W. Thomas,  
Columbus, John C. Kolbe,  
Egypt, to be supplied.

Austin District—

J. W. Whipple, P. E.  
Austin, to be supplied,  
Bastrop, Jas. E. Ferguson,  
Bastrop Colored Miss., Fr. Wilson,  
Seguin, Jas. M. Follansbee,

San Marcos, Lewis B. Whipple,  
San Antonio, Wm. Young,  
Seguin German Miss., H. P. Young,  
Georgetown Miss., James H. Addison.

The above is the official list, as published in the General Minutes, but it is incomplete. In the appointments as they appear in the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*, following the conference, are the following additions: C. Richardson, editor *Banner*; a Montgomery station appears with Jas. G. Johnson in charge, and a Rio Grande district, Nehemiah A. Cravens, P. E., with these appointments: Brownsville Station, N. A. Cravens; Point Isabel, to be supplied; Rio Grande City, to be supplied—which appears to have been a temporary arrangement for allowing Cravens to serve as his own presiding elder, as his post was so far removed from other portions of the work.

The appointments all through this early period will show in most instances that the preachers were changed at the end of one year. They were nearly all unmarried men, and moving from one appointment to another was a small matter. A preacher's possessions usually consisted of a horse and a pair of saddle-bags, in which could be conveyed "a change of raiment" and a few books and personal articles. A preacher frequently had a wornout horse at the end of the year, and sometimes borrowed one to ride to conference, with the understanding that his successor would return it. It was nearly always "Good-bye" to the folks when a preacher left a charge for conference, as there was no returning to pack up, or to enjoy lingering farewells, or to store up in memory expressions of regret.

A few extracts from letters will serve to give a glimpse here and there of preachers and conditions during the year 1851. The first is from James H. Addison, appointed to the Georgetown circuit, giving an account of his first round, and this is followed by others from the same

source during the year. The first letter is dated "Webster's Valley, Brushey, Jany. 14th/51."

Through the goodness of God I have at last arrived at my field of labour, and have went about half way round. Not having an opportunity before of writing, is my excuse for my seeming neglect, for you must know that we are not so pleasantly situated in this up country as perhaps you folks are in the lower country. For our *one* house serves for Parlour, bed-room, kitchen, smoke-house, and in fact for everything else that houses are used for, add to this, you know the proverb, "A poor man for children," and as the folks are poor here, there is no lack of noise. But at present I am at a very clever house near the head of Brushey, the proprietor of which is by the name of Windsor, a methodist Local preacher, and though not exempt from the poor man's blessing, yet they have sense enough to keep them out of the Preacher's way.

I left home, as you know, on Wednesday evening, rode to old Father Thompsons—spent a pleasant night—off early and arrived at Cameron about three oclock—— Had my horse put up at the Tavern. About sun-down I went to the stable to see my horse. I found that he had not been fed, and on inquiry I learned the startling fact, that there was not an ear of corn about the whole place. I was told however, that the Landlord was after some. . . . Late at night supper came on, and such a supper. But it is useless to try to give you an idea of our bill of fare. Suffice it to say that there was very little to eat, and that so badly cooked that it was not fit to eat. About this time "mine host" made his appearance with his few nubbins of corn. Pilgrim got a *few* of them, but very few. In the morning I was waked by the Landlord and one of his boarders quarrelling. The poor boarder—a Doct F—had been heating his copper a little too much with whiskey—and he woke up very thirsty. He called to a negro girl to bring him a cup of coffee—He still in bed—The Landlord told him there was none. the Doc declared there was, for he seen the negro with the coffee pot. One word brought on another till they got at it. . . . I was soon up, saw three or four nubbins doled out very sparingly, tried to eat my breakfast, but couldn't—got my horse—paid my \$1.00 and went on my way. . . . Got up to my appointment, or rather



the place where it was to be—about one o'clock—found the folks (Glenns) very clever—a little dirty or so—took dinner. . . . At night I arrived at a Mr Marshall and though living in a hut of a place, and very much crowded, yet they treated me very well, indeed— Next morning rode to the appointment at Griffin's found them disposed to treat me well—preached to a few folks that gathered— No one seemed to be very much interested, in fact they set still, but I don't know that they heard much— After dinner I rode about 4 miles further to the house of my class-leader bro Karnes Here I enjoyed myself very much— The old man I found to be very intelligent, and his family was ditto at least a great deal more so than those around them Next morning—Sabbath Rode to my appointment on the Lampases— The people had forgotten the appt—as usual, and there were but few that attended—I got up read—and gave out a hymn, and commenced singing—the folks set still, got down to pray—still they set—Preached the best I could—prayed again, still they wouldn't kneel— I did not like to commence scolding the first time I preached to them, but I promise myself that they will rise to sing and kneel to pray the next time I preach to them—

Took dinner at bro Blair's, and in the afternoon rode to the little town of Nolensville<sup>1</sup>— Here I found the town in a perfect stir, anxious to see and hear the new preacher— I found bro A. McCorkle ready to receive me, bro Stickney too— The town was literally emptied, a very fine audience indeed. I tried to preach the best I could I am very much in hopes we will be able to turn this little town up-side down—we have a pretty good class in town—next morning after arranging matters as well as I could—I rode over to the "Salow"— I don't know how to spell the word<sup>2</sup>—to bro Whitefield Chalks Found him doing finely as far as this world is concerned—but doing very little for his soul. . . . Chalk has a very fine grist and saw mill and is making money very fast—

Next day rode to bro C. C. Cooks—found a very clever family—staid till friday evening—preached to them on friday morning—in the evening rode to an old mans by the name of Queen—Dirt, DIRT, *DIRT* was the distinctive feature of the whole con-

<sup>1</sup> A year or two later the name was changed to Belton.

<sup>2</sup> The Salado.

cern—the old man an “Arkansawen” and an old Granny—the old Lady a Baptist and an ignorant one at that One that wants every body to “follow the Lord down in the water”—— The Lord save me from old Baptist women

Preached to them the best I was able, after which in company with old bro Queen, alias the “ancient of days,” to Georgetown—went to the Tavern and put up—went to the Division of the Sons<sup>3</sup>

Preached the next day to a very fine audience—the next day rode to my present station

In a subsequent letter from the same correspondent we learn of his immediate round of Sunday—or, as it was then always expressed, “Sabbath” appointments. These were, first Sundays, at Nolensville; second, “at the Station high up on the Leon”; third, at Georgetown; fourth, at Ben Allen’s, on Brushey Creek. The first quarterly meeting was held on February 23, at John T. Cox’s, near Georgetown. From Nolensville he writes in April, in response to a preacher’s complaint about his own seedy clothes, that “I know by bitter experience what it is to have ‘an old coat, a seedy vest and a shocking bad cravat,’ ” and describes his wardrobe as being in the last stage of “consumtion.” But he exhorts, “Cheer up, my brother, there is a better day coming, and may be you and I will see it.” He confesses, however, that his precept is at variance with his practice, “for I find it hard to be cheerful when my pockets are empty and my clothes torn.” At Nolensville during a meeting some kind women, observing his torn pantaloons, went to the store and bought goods, and cut out and made him a new pair, of which he writes later in boastful pride.

A more detailed view of Georgetown circuit we may gather from a letter penned later in the year, as well as an epitome of the religious condition of the people. “Your circuit is an old one,” he writes to his correspond-

<sup>3</sup> Sons of Temperance.

ent, "and Methodism is established there. Here, on the contrary, the prowling Wolves of Campbellism, Drunkardism, and Devilism of every grade, are ready to devour the sheep. . . . There is a great deal of hard riding to be done, and very little good being effected, save at certain portions of the work. Nolansville is improving very much, in more ways than one, it improves in sin and wickedness, as well as in every other way. There are a set of milk and water Methodists at this place [Lampasas, where the letter was written] who do more injury than all the wicked put together—affraid to serve God fully, for fear they will miss some of the pleasures of the world, and affraid to cut loose from God, for fear of Death and Judgment. . . . I will now give you my appointments, so that there will be no difficulty in finding me—the 1st Sabbath in July—next month—I am at Nolansville—The next week after is spent between that point and Fort Gates on the Leon—(try to make it so that you will meet me any other time, as there are no roads through the up country and I would be difficult to find) The Tuesday night after 15th of July I am at Joel Blair's, on the Lampases, where the road leading from Georgetown to Nolansville crosses On Wednesday evening 16th at bro Cooks—on Willis creek On Thursday evening 17th at Queens, just above where the Camp-Meeting was held on Gabriel—on Sat & Sab 19 & 20 the 3d Sunday at Georgetown—Sunday afternoon, at Rev John T Cox's 7 miles west of Georgetown, on Brushey on the road leading from Georgetown to Austin The following Wednesday 23d at Websters Valley alias bro T F Wind-sors alias on the head of Brushey Friday following 25th July 10 miles below Berry Allens on Brushey The 4th Sabbath 27th at Berry Allens about 5 miles below Kenneys fort on Brushey The Tuesday after 29th at Tom Allens on the Gabriel 3 miles above Mercers old Fort the friday after on Little River, at Mr Glenns 4 miles above Bryants, and the next Sabbath 1st in August at Nolans-

ville—Thus do I go round, like a dog following his tail, till I get tired”

Georgetown mission, then, 1850-51, from the best deciphering we can make of this circuit geography, embraced portions of Williamson, Bell, Coryell, and Lampasas counties, and perhaps one or more points in Burnet County, and was the northwestern frontier mission of the Texas Conference. Cameron, which our circuit preacher passed through en route to his charge, was embraced in the Nashville circuit.

In the lower country we have accounts of the first church buildings being completed and dedicated during 1851 at Matagorda, Bastrop and Montgomery, all of which places were among the first to be visited by Methodist preachers in the early days. The Methodist church at Matagorda was subsequently destroyed by a storm. “It is supposed that the roof of the building was blown out to sea,” says Thrall, “as it was never found.” “Our church in Bastrop is nearly ready for use,” writes J. E. Ferguson, the preacher there, in June, 1851; “and think when it is finished it will be the finest wood church in the state. It is 40 by 60—gallery across one end—Plastered—Lighted by ten lamps—Eight of them swinging.” Continuing he says: “I must not forget to tell you of our good meeting on Cedar Creek 12 miles west of Bastrop. It was my 2d Quarterly meeting. Our meeting was a triumph, for it was in the face of iceberg Campbellism, and sneering Infidelity. Eighteen joined the Church on probation, and among the number, many bright, convincing Holy Ghost Conversions. Bro J. W. Whipple preached Monday night one of his best sermons. Our boy Whipple (Lewis B. Whipple) astonished the natives on Sunday.”

In the *Banner* of November 9, 1851, is an account of the dedication of the church at Bastrop. The sermon was preached by J. W. Kenney, and an afternoon sermon was delivered by Father Haynie, both of whom had helped

to plant the church at Bastrop and surrounding country. A subscription amounting to \$2300 was raised, an extraordinary collection for that day. Father Wilson, in charge of the Bastrop colored mission, preached at night. "Quiet and unobserved in the congregation," says the account, referring to the dedicatory exercises, "sat the man, to whom more than any other, perhaps all others, we are indebted for this beautiful temple. I mean our energetic and talented Elder Whipple." The church at Montgomery, called "Alexander Chapel," was dedicated by C. Richardson in July, 1851.

An interesting report of the German mission at Fredericksburg is contributed in May, 1851, by C. A. Grote, as follows:

The Mission has been two years in existence and on entering upon the discharge of my duties I found forty-five members on record, who all more or less enjoyed some degree of the grace of God. . . . The members had bought a house last year which is now occupied for divine worship. There are also lots obtained, two of which were bought with the house, and the other was given by a brother, all of which, is according to our Discipline, deeded to the M. E. Church, South. Our second quarterly meeting was held on the 27th and 28th of April. Brother Young from the Seguin German Mission was with us, in the place of the presiding elder, and it was indeed a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. . . . Fifteen persons joined on probation at this time, one of whom was a Roman Catholic; and I think it would not be unprofitable to present the circumstances of his conversion for the benefit of the German work. When the Catholics learned his intention the priest asked him if he would not go to confession? The man replied, no, as he had concluded to join the Methodists. The priest became excited and appointed a prayer-meeting for the benefit of this back-slidden brother. His wife also joined, and although a Protestant had as much or more opposition from her parents. Another family which belonged to the Lutheran Church, had a little child which the mother would have baptized by the Methodist minister. Her husband did not like it, but at last consented, and they called



upon me to dedicate the child to God by holy baptism. One day the man was asked by his associates who baptized the child. He told them the Methodist minister. In the dispute that followed, when they saw that he held with the Methodists, they whipped him thoroughly, and since that time he and his wife never fail to fill their place in our church.

The years 1850-51 saw the rise of three new Methodist schools in Texas, these being at Chappell Hill and Bastrop, in the Texas Conference, and at Henderson, in the East Texas Conference. Chappell Hill, located in the eastern part of Washington County, was rising into prominence as a Methodist community, and here in 1850 the "Chappell Hill Male and Female Institute" had its beginning, with two male and three female teachers and one hundred students. The conference of 1850 took the Institute under its patronage, and from the first the school prospered. At Bastrop, during the same year, a Methodist academy was projected, which opened its doors in 1851. A report to the church paper stated that more than \$20,000 had been raised at Bastrop during the year for the new church building and for the academy. The progress of these schools will be noticed in a later chapter. At present the question arises as to the cause which gave birth to these new institutions in the Texas Conference, located as they both were within only a short distance of Ruttersville College.

With regard to the pioneer venture at Ruttersville we are told that "Ruttersville College, through un wisdom somewhere, was on the decline, though it had been in operation only about ten years."<sup>4</sup> Some such general statement is as far as our modern references go in explanation of Ruttersville's decline. But the correspondence of the preachers of that day throws some light on the situation. From this we gather that one Applewhite, a Methodist local preacher residing at Ruttersville, and con-

<sup>4</sup> C. C. Cody, in several articles on our early schools.

nected with the College, came under serious charges of immorality and swindling. The accused was brought to trial in the church, all the details relating to the case it is not necessary to relate here; but the reports growing out of the matter spread far and wide. Says J. E. Ferguson, in a letter of May 18, 1850: "You wish to know something about the Applewhite case. To give you a history would require a weeks writing, but my private opinion is, that it is worse than we want it. . . . But this it has done, it has given the death blow to the Ruttersville College. And I will say this to you if we can not move the College from that place I want the Conference to have no connection with it whatever; for I fear that the egg was laid wrong, and has never been hatched properly, and appears to be an ill stared thing. The citizens of Fayette county so far from fostering & patronising the College they have taken great delight in pulling it down." Under date of July 24th he says: "The Ruttersville school is well ny dead. There is not a student from Travis or Bastrop Counties that has returned, and to name the matter to any parent is to insult them, and the reasons for all this I will not put on paper. Applewhite is up before the church for a new trial with some other charges of swindling &c &c."

The reports to which reference has been made cast a shadow upon the domestic life of one of the best known and best loved men of the early days of Ruttersville College—Chauncey Richardson. Time has kindly drawn the curtain upon the situation which existed at Ruttersville in 1850, and it shall not be our part to lift it. Reference is here made to these things, which then were matters of common knowledge or report, only to show that Ruttersville College did not die a natural death. The institution lingered along with a small patronage until 1856, when it ceased to be a Church school, being succeeded by the "Texas Monumental and Military Institute," under private management, and its course thereafter was very

brief. Most of the old Methodist families, who had gathered about this early "Athens of Texas," moved away from the town, and it dwindled to the obscure village described in later years in a History of Fayette County, published in 1902, as follows: "Rutersville—about six miles northeast from Lagrange, in the fertile Rutersville prairie, hog-wallow land, near the banks of Rocky Creek. Rutersville consists of a store, a saloon, a gin and a blacksmith shop. It is a voting place in the county and a post-office. Mr. G. D. Wessels is the owner of a fine hall for dancing, the best in the county. He is also the owner of a first-class saloon."

Editor Richardson's report of the East Texas Conference of 1851 may be given almost entire, except the appointments, as it contains information which the scanty General Minutes do not furnish. One may also, if he is careful, discover some editorial characteristics which were not confined to the olden days. The account is as follows:

Henderson, Texas, December 1st, 1851.

In company with Rev. S. B. Cameron, I arrived in this town on the 25th inst. (25th ult. he means). We found the roads very bad and of course we made very slow progress. We found that we had been expected, and arrangements made for our accommodation in the family of Mrs. Shed, a member of our church, and a most estimable Christian lady.

The town of Henderson is handsomely situated on a beautiful elevation with slightly undulating surface, and contains a population of some twelve hundred inhabitants, and many fine buildings, which evince taste, enterprise and wealth. Our first view of the town impressed us favorably. Being the seat of justice for the enterprising county of Rusk, it is destined at no distant day to become a town of commercial importance. It is also spoken of as the Athens of Eastern Texas as it is the seat of East Texas Conference Institute. Of the prospects of this institution, I am not prepared to speak at this moment.

The East Texas Conference commenced its seventh session in this town on the 26th ult. Rev. O. Fisher conducted the de-

votional service. The Bishop not having arrived a President was balloted for, resulting in the election of Rev. S. A. Williams. Brother Williams was quite modest in the acceptance of the Presidency of the Conference, and on taking the chair made some appropriate remarks. Rev. J. W. Fields was re-elected secretary, and Rev. James W. Shipman selected Assistant Secretary. Rev. James R. Bellamy of the Holston Conference presented his certificate of transfer, and took his seat within the bar of the Conference. Rev. Edward F. Thwing was readmitted.

Appropriate committees were appointed on "Public Worship," "Sabbath Schools," "Books and Periodicals," "Memoirs," "Necessitous Cases" and "Finances."

The second day Nathan S. Johnson was re-admitted. The following were admitted on trial: Henry Fullingim, John P. Simpson, Daniel M. Stovall, James Johnson, John McMillan, Harvey W. Cumming and Samuel D. Sansom. Other names were presented, but action was deferred for the present. The increase by admission on trial will not be less than ten, and two by re-admission.

The Conference held two sessions each day, Friday and Saturday. The business is conducted with great harmony—all evincing a high regard for the feelings and interest of each other. The examination of the candidates for full admission was conducted by Rev. O. Fisher, in the church. His address to them was highly appropriate and impressive. The committee on Sabbath Schools made an excellent report which was adopted.

The missionary anniversary was held on Saturday night, at which \$101.00 was collected. The house was crowded, and all seemed interested in the missionary enterprise. Of my speech I will not speak, but that of Rev. O. Fisher was worthy of the man, and of the occasion.

Sunday was a high day in Henderson. The love feast at nine o'clock, conducted by Rev. S. A. Williams, was highly interesting. At the eleven o'clock service the house could not accommodate the congregation. It was my privilege to occupy the pulpit hour. At 3 p. m. Rev. O. Fisher delivered a most eloquent and effective sermon on the sacred office, to a crowded and deeply interested audience. Brother Fisher stands deservedly high in the estimation of the Conference and of the people.

The night service comprised a sermon from Rev. S. Kingston



and the administration of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Rev. O. Fisher was desirous that the Conference should send a missionary to California, in response to Dr. Boring's proposition, and wished to be the appointee to that field. But it was considered that the call for missionaries in East Texas was as urgent as the California call. The proposition of Bro. Fisher in the premises was declined because he could not be spared, and not for the want of missionary zeal in the Conference.

C. RICHARDSON.

In a brief statistical summary which accompanied the foregoing editorial correspondence we have for the first time information of the number of church buildings in the conference—"Chapels (deeded) 40." Referring to the General Minutes we are told that "No minutes of this conference were received until July, 1852, and when received were so imperfect that we had to answer the 13th question (relating to membership statistics) by the minutes of last year." There was a considerable dropping out of preachers, as shown in the list of appointments. Robert Crawford was appointed Sunday school agent; Job M. Baker was "left without appointment at his request"; J. G. Fawcett "left without appointment on account of ill health"; S. G. Culver "left without appointment at his request"; Neil Brown "left without appointment in consequence of ill health"; John Powell "located at his request"; R. B. Wells was transferred to "Western Texas Conference"; J. W. Fields, "agent East Texas Conference and Fowler Institute." The following were received by transfer: J. R. Bellamy, from the Holston Conference; Geo. W. Lentz and Alex. Henkle, from the Tennessee Conference; John N. Hamill, from the Louisiana Conference, and Job M. Baker, from the Missouri Conference—although Baker had been living and preaching in Texas for many years, by a peculiar circumstance his membership seems to have been retained with his former conference until now.



Fowler Institute, located at Henderson, and named for Littleton Fowler, is first mentioned in the minutes of the conference of 1851. J. W. Fields, who had been named as its "agent," says that a brick edifice had just been erected, and "we were ready to open (and did shortly afterward open) the institution, manned by Isaac Alexander, A.M., and his brother as teachers. But there stood a ghost at the door. A debt of about one thousand dollars was calling loudly on the trustees for payment, and suit threatened if not liquidated soon. Under these circumstances the Agent was appointed. . . . The year was spent in expensive traveling in Texas and other states—hard begging, and after my traveling expenses and a small salary which did not meet half my entire family expenses for the year, I only had about \$50 for the Institution. This was the most mortifying result of my itinerant life. After my wife spending the summer with her parents, we returned in the fall fully satisfied with College agencies."

The Texas Conference for 1851 was held at Bastrop, opening on December 17th—three weeks following the East Texas Conference. Bishop Capers had been assigned to the conferences in Texas, but on account of illness he was absent from both. Robert Alexander was elected president at Bastrop, and C. Richardson was again elected secretary.

At this conference efforts were made to rehabilitate the sagging fortunes of Rutgersville College. R. Alexander was appointed special agent for the College—in connection with his pastoral charge of Chappell Hill and Brenham—with authority to appoint sub-agents; and J. M. Wesson, David Coulson and I. G. John were appointed a visiting committee to examine into its affairs. A visiting committee was appointed for the Chappell Hill Institute also, consisting of W. C. Lewis, J. M. Derrhammer, and James E. Ferguson.

The conference committee which had charge of the

publication of the *Banner* found it necessary to report that that enterprise was not meeting expectations, and that curtailment of expenses was necessary. We have seen that a contract was made in Houston for the printing of one thousand copies of the paper, at \$2500 per annum; and that it was expected that the subscriptions would pay the printer, and that the advertising would take care of the editor. At the end of the conference year 1851 it was found that the number of subscriptions had run to only eight or nine hundred, and that many of these had not been paid for and had not been discontinued. In consequence a considerable debt had accumulated. The committee reduced the salary of the editor from \$800 a year to \$300, following which Editor Richardson resigned. George Rottenstein was elected editor, and he took charge of the paper and carried it on in connection with an appointment on the Houston African Mission. Following the conference at Bastrop the Publication Committee raised funds from a few financial friends sufficient to purchase a printing outfit for the *Banner*, and Charles Shearn of Houston, a prominent layman and merchant, was induced to supervise the financial end of the paper, which he did successfully, and without remuneration until the enterprise was tided over its immediate embarrassments.

At the conference at Bastrop the following were admitted on trial: Peter Moelling, John Patton, Marcus L. Smock, Lewis J. Wright, and Thomas Lancaster. R. B. Wells, who had just transferred back from the East Texas Conference, W. S. Hamilton, and R. Long located. John Haynie and Jesse Hord remain on the superannuated list, to which is added the name of William Young. Charles F. Rottenstein withdrew from the conference, and later entered the ranks of the Episcopal clergy. The statistics give an increase of 997 white members—the largest increase of any previous year. In the appointments the districts with their presiding elders are as

follows: Galveston, C. Richardson; Ruttersville, James M. Wesson; Springfield, W. C. Lewis; Austin, J. W. Whipple; Victoria, D. Carl. The "Rio Grande District" of last year disappears. Chappell Hill and Brenham appear the first time in the appointments, united, with Robert Alexander; and Waco makes its first appearance, with P. M. Yell in charge. J. W. Phillips and B. L. Peel are "left without appointments on account of ill health, and J. W. DeVilbiss on account of pecuniary embarrassments." Asbury Davidson and Daniel W. Fly were transferred from the Mississippi Conference to the Texas Conference this year, but they did not appear in the Texas appointments until later. Geo. W. Sneed, a superannuated member of the Tennessee Conference, and a brother of Joseph P. Sneed, died in Texas during 1851.

Our correspondent of last year on the Georgetown circuit, James H. Addison, was changed to the Corsicana circuit, and a few extracts from his letters during 1852 while riding this newly settled black land circuit to the northwest will be of interest. His first letter was dated Corsicana, January 9, 1852, from which the following is taken:

I left home—as you are aware—on Monday, and arrived safe and sound the same day at Nashville—— On tuesday I—after getting badly lost—arrived at bro Carroll Powers. and on Wednesday I got to Yells (at Springfield). . . . Our Mordecai a'nt hopping about his appointment. He declares he will not ride the circuit at all. I will try and give you some of his reasons for not taking the circuit. In the first place he had made an arrangement just before Conference to put a Steam Saw Mill on old Billy Nelms' piney in Leon County. he was to furnish the mills and nelms the pine, and they both were to share the profits—— Yells calculation was to still remain on the district, and be able to attend to the mill, without interfering with his Quarterly meetings, but being confined to a circuit he could not attend to it at all. Another reason was that at the very utmost Springfield circuit couldn't pay more than \$100.00 and that

would starve his family. A still greater cause of complaint than either of the above consisted in this. that by the hand of P. M. Yell he addressed three several communications to the Conf. One directed to the Bishop containing suggestions in regard to the men to be sent to this District. Another giving an account of his work, as well as of his preachers—— And still a third directed to the Bishop and members of the Conference. Not one of the communications were read in Conf. and no attention paid to them at all. . . . Left Yells Thursday morning and late at night arrived at a good bros house by the name of Ward, who lives in the forks of Pin Oak and Richland creeks just below where Peter Jacksons land is situated. . . . Friday in the evening—after stopping by the way—I got to Corsicana. stoped at the Tavern the proprietor of which is a Methodist local Preacher—— Found a large crowd of boarders—— Soon the supper bell rung. It was Hurra boys; the first one gets there gets the best chance, no blessing asked, as fast as they struck the seat, so quick would their fork stick fast in a piece of meat, and they fell to eating. Well we got through supper after awhile, and went into the Hall, all the boarders, or most all of them went to see the Elephant—which is a ten pin alley over which is the following impressive sign “Corsicana Elephant”——

From another, dated Waxahachie, February 22, 1852:

My circuit is a pleasant one in several respects—1st. The rides are not hard, twenty miles being the farthest ride in a day, and only twice do I make such rides in a round, the distance averaging each day about 8 miles. 2d. In having a very hospitable set of folks to deal with, those who feel for a preacher—a correct moral community. As an evidence of this I may state that in this town (Waxahachie) which has not been in existence more than about 12 months, and which now numbers about 100 souls has a very fine M. E. Church, and no Doggery, nor has there been one. Beat that if you can. 3d. Because there is no jarring with other denominations all is peace and prosperity, and methodism takes the day. But as usual there are drawbacks. one for instance. a Lady at whose house I was stopping, a member of the church, after supper placed the books

down on the table, invited me to hold prayers, and then quietly took up her knitting I selected my chapter & hymn, and waited till she quit she knit on and I waited, till she was convinced I would not commence till she quit, she folded up her work & I commenced, but as soon as she had got me fairly started she recommenced her knitting with a will. I soon put a stop to it by calling her to her knees—— All such as this however, is easily gotten over and if there is no greater drawbacks than this I can get along. . . . I have taken about 16 in the church since I have been here, and I think there is a fair prospect of a good many more. Day before yesterday (Sabbath) I tried to preach four times at this little Town at 9 I tried to preach a sermon on Sabbath schools, at 11 to the citizens, at 3 to the negroes, at night to the citizens again I also organized a Sabbath school, and obtained 30 or more members. Our Quarterly Meeting (held at Corsicana) went off pretty well considering all things. It was very bad cold weather, and the house we worshiped in was a very open one, Yet we had some intimations of good nine joined the church Brother Lewis was with us, in good health and spirits, and earned for himself a name as a big preacher in the town of Corsicana

From a number of letters written during the year a variety of observations on persons and conditions are taken:

Your letter found me indulging in a fit of the blues caused by the absence of my "sliding Elder"—— Did you ever have a Quarterly meeting coming on and be bored out of all patience by the enquirys of your flock in reference to his (the Elder's) coming? . . . And did you ever start to the Q. M. with awful forebodings in reference to your ability to say any thing profitable, and at the same time feel a presentiment that he would not come? . . . My Quarterly meeting came, but no P. E. I felt a little fretted as there were folks who had come about twenty two miles to see him. I heard that he was sick so that contented me, and the people concluded that if they couldn't get biscuit they would take dodger and they set and listened to me. The meeting closed with 13 accessions . . . bro Lewis got up to the two days meeting at Waxahachie (held at a later



date) and informed me that he had the misfortune to have his horse stolen. When this became known the folks of Waxahachie with characteristic liberality made him up between 60 & 70 dollars in the hard money. This for a little town of seven or eight houses is doing very finely indeed, isn't it?... My circuit has been very slow in paying their preacher this year. nearly three quarters of the year gone, and I have received about twenty eight dollars. I have great difficulty to keep myself decent. I should have not been able to do that, but I had the good fortune to marry several of the folks this year, for which I received \$16.95 all told. That helped me out considerably. I have collected, however for Missionary purposes some \$50 odd, and I hope to increase it before I leave the circuit. . . . We had bro McKenzie to preach to us last night, and—to my shame be it spoken, I haven't laughed as much in Church in twelve months, as I did then. he makes so many quaint remarks, as well as so many rough expressions, for instance "Poor knock-kneed scabby sheep"—"pigeon livered coward." But I need not attempt to give you an idea of his preaching. . . . We had a sweet revival in Corsicana some four weeks ago. This place has been considered one of the hardest places around, all efforts to get up a revival had failed, by the help of the Lord however, we were enabled to kindle a little fire. it took hold of the giants, and the tallest sons of Anak about this place fell before it 26 united with the church some of the most influential ones of the town. I think we will have a camp meeting grow out of the revival here, and if so, I think we will have a very moral place of a town. Bro McKenzie gives rather a doleful account of matters and things pertaining to your circuit, bro Morse sick, unable to attend to his appointments, the Baptists and Campbellites stealing your sheep, and the devil triumphing. Lord help us all. I had rather dwell with a community of savages than with Campbellites. I—thank goodness—have none on my work, but occasionally I go to bro Nelms' circuit, where they are as thick as hops, and you may be sure we have some rare times. They are death to spirituality, killing religion as dead as a stone. . . . I have had a continuous revival all round my circuit. A hundred and thirty one joined and I think before the year is out, I will make it a hundred and fifty. . . . What a difference does the appearance of the country present now, from

what it did the first time I came up here—then there was hardly people enough to fill a little rail pen, now the whole face of the country is covered with farms &c.

We will close this correspondence with a list of the appointments on Corsicana circuit, as the preacher sets them down:

Tuesday	April	6th	six miles below Corsicana
Sat	"	10th	Rush creek
Sunday	"	11th	Richland town
Tuesday	"	13th	Head of Richland
Wednesday	"	14th	Chambers creek
Thursday	"	15th	Do " Singletons
Friday	"	16th	Head of Waxahachie Hawkins
Sunday	"	18th	Town of Waxahachi
Friday	"	23	Trinity City On the River Trinity
Sunday	"	25	Chatfield point 14 miles from Corsicana
Wednesday	"	28	Baggett. Trinity river below
Thursday	"	29th	In the forks of Trinity & Chambers creek
Frid	"	30th	12 miles above on Chambers creek Hilburns
Sat	May	1st	still above on the Corsicana road Hamiltons
Sunday	"	2d	At Corsicana

The appts will stand this way but the one round. then the Q M knocks them all out.

Dropping in among the older churches of the lower country we have an example of how a church often wasted its energies, or perverted them, rather, in an attempted application of discipline, when the courts of the church were too often used as a means of airing personal grievances. The case in point is one of which we have the record, occurring on the Victoria circuit in 1852, and was introduced by the following letter:

Canaan November 6th 1852.

Rev Mr \_\_\_\_\_

Sir after my respects to you I will commence the painful yet dutiful task of giving you my charges against Joel Heard as an offending Brother As you are well aware I have not done this without waiting a due time and giving all parties concerned in this matter ample time to make such disposition of the matter as they saw proper I have been tramped on and that not a little and thus far have submitted but to proceed to my charge without any more remarks on the subject

Joel Heard did on the thirty first day of July A D 1852 willfully malignantly and with forethought knowledge and intent to rong and injure your complainant swear false in the Court House in the Town of Victoria and state of Texas and has continued to state that which was false varias times since to the great injure and damage to your complainer

In like manner did Humphry Heard on the same day and place as above mentioned state under oath that which was not so and has at varias other times continued to state false to the great damage of your complainer all of which I am prepared to prove your petitioner would therefore pray that the offenders Joel Heard and Humphrey Heard be caused to appear before a commtee of the Church in legal form and manner to answer the (illegible) they cannot expect that any sivel not say religious society can put up with such behavior your petitioner would farther pray that the offenders be brought to trial before your next appointment at this place and that they be suspended this matter has been defered long enough all ready yours with respect

OLIVER P. BAILEY

Evidently the complainant was advised that his charges were not specific, and he subsequently comes back with the following:

the special charges that I would make against the two mr Heards to wit Joel and Humphry Heard are simply these that on the day and place before mentioned stated false concerning the fense of my own and concerning the hogs which are thomas C Heards they both stated that the hogs in controversy wer

Thomas C Heard's which I am prepared to prove is false and Joel heard stated that my fence was down for six weeks after I had planted my corn which I am prepared to prove is false and Humphry heard stated that the hog that was killed would weigh from 175 to 200 lbs which I am prepared to prove is not so with respect yours & C

Upon receipt of this bill of charges the machinery of the church was set in motion by the preacher in charge, with a view of bringing the offenders strictly to account. Citations containing the charges and specifications were written out and handed to the accused, and both were cited to trial. A committee of trial was appointed, a time set, and the matter came on to be heard. The record contains several pages of testimony—of direct and cross-examination—and the findings of the committee. The charges were not sustained, in the opinion of the committee, and the following remarks were added: "Committee think the Plaintiff manifest bad disposition and unchristian temper." The following entry is made by the preacher presiding: "Bailey walked up to the altar and addressing me in rather a spiteful manner said, 'You will please take my name off of the class paper.'"

At the conference at Bastrop in 1851 we have seen that Chauncey Richardson resigned as editor of the *Banner* and was appointed to the Galveston district. H. S. Thrall records in his "Reminiscences" that after the adjournment of conference he had a long, private conversation with him. "He seemed depressed," says the writer; "he spoke of Rutgersville College, for which he had labored so hard, and of the *Banner*, which he had hoped to see a power in Texas. His experience in college and editorial work was not satisfactory, and henceforth he intended to devote his whole life to the regular itinerant work. We shook hands with moistened eyes and parted with words which proved to be final farewell. The next tidings I had of Chauncey Richardson he was dead."

It was a sad decline, hastened by the misfortunes which had overtaken Ruttersville College—though the responsibility for these were in no sense his—and by the embarrassments of the *Banner*, of which he had been editor for two years. Mr. Richardson immediately after conference moved his family back to Ruttersville from which they had departed a year or two before, where he had a home, and from that point served his district. He had completed one round on his district and was preparing to set out home, when he was taken down with pneumonia at the house of Rev. John Patton, in Fort Bend County. His family was notified, and his wife reached him a short time before his death. He expired on April 11, 1852. His remains were transported to Ruttersville and buried, and there he sleeps until this day, upon a hill overlooking the site of what was once Ruttersville College.



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE YEARS 1853-1854

THE East Texas Conference met on December 2, 1852, at Rusk, with Bishop Paine presiding. J. W. Fields was again elected secretary.

Wm. McCarty, Jesse S. Vann, and F. A. Medaris were admitted on trial. S. G. Culver and Jas. W. Shipman located; F. G. Fawcett and Geo. W. Lentz took the supernumerary relation, and E. P. Chisholm, Robert Crawford, Geo. West and M. F. Cole are reported on the superannuated list. Jno. N. Hamill was transferred to the Louisiana Conference, to be re-transferred back, however, at the end of the year.

The Texas Conference assembled again at Bastrop, meeting this year on December 22. Bishop Paine had another long, cross-country ride from one conference to another, and he was met and attended, as he was three years before, by J. W. Whipple. "While traveling with Brother Whipple of the Texas Conference," says his biographer, "a report sadder than any ordinary death-wail came to the travelers that Brother Whipple's son had been drowned, and that his body could not be found. He gave to his afflicted brother the tenderest sympathies, and expressed the hope that the report might be false. Upon their arrival at Bastrop, the seat of the conference, they found the report too true. The father was overwhelmed, and the distress was increased by the loss of the body. On the first day of the conference the body was found, and the conference adjourned to attend the funeral of Wilbur Scott Whipple. The Bishop officiated,

and gave great comfort to the family by his tender Christian counsel and sweet words of consolation, so radiant in our holy religion. As he returned to the laborious duties of the conference at two o'clock, P. M., he simply wrote in his diary: 'Sleep on, sweet one.' "

This incident cast a gloom over the occasion, and besides the conference was saddened by the absence of the one who had served it for so many years as secretary, Chauncey Richardson, whose death we have noticed. Homer S. Thrall was elected secretary.

At this conference John W. Chalk, Benj. Dashiell, Wm. L. Kidd, Thomas Wooldridge, Henderson Lafferty, Joseph E. Rankin, and John W. Addison were admitted on trial, the last named being the third son out of one family who had entered the Texas Conference. The ranks were depleted by six locations: John C. Kolbe, Jas. W. Lloyd, Samuel M. Kingston, C. W. Thomas, Asbury Davidson, and D. W. Fly, the last two having transferred to Texas only the year before. S. B. Cameron, who had filled Austin station during the year, took the supernumerary relation. Our old friends John Haynie, Jesse Hord and William Young remain on the superannuated list. A considerable company of reinforcements were received by transfer, as follows: John S. McGee, Wm. P. Read and Ivy H. Cox, from the Kentucky Conference; F. S. Petway, J. W. Cooley and John W. Ledbetter, from the Tennessee Conference; and Garrett L. Patton from the Alabama Conference, and Thomas G. Gilmore from the Louisiana Conference.

In the appointments a new district appears—Huntsville, with R. Alexander, P. E. The other districts with their presiding elders were: Galveston, R. W. Kenon; Rutersville, James M. Wesson; Austin, J. W. Whipple; Springfield, Garrett L. Patton; Victoria, Daniel Carl.

John W. Addison was appointed to Lavacca circuit, with G. W. Cottingham, who had come out from Arkan-

sas, as his senior colleague. From Addison's journal and his letters home we will extract some of his experiences and observations on conditions. The first from his journal:

On Thursday, the 14th of January, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-three, I left my home near Caldwell to travel on the Lavacca Circuit, the first appointment I ever received from the Conference.

I reached a good Bro. Baptist's where I spent the night very pleasantly. The following morning was a rainy one, but my appointment being two days' ride farther on, I took my leave, and after riding all day in the rain and swimming one stream, I reached the home of a Campbellite, where I was hospitably entertained. On the morrow I rode to within thirteen miles of my appointment, when I was stopped by the Navidad, which was impassable; so I was forced to wait until Monday when I crossed the creek and rode to Bro. Hester's. I got my dinner and then rode to the town of Hallettsville.

Jan. 21st. This evening I tried to preach to a handful of people from St. John, 5th Chapter and 6th Verse.

Jan. 22. Had an appointment today at Petersburg, very few in attendance.

Jan. 25th. Day before yesterday (Sunday) I preached at Rocky.

Feb. 4th. Bro. G. W. Cottingham and I have been around the circuit and have gotten things tolerably straight for the year's work.

Feb. 17th. We have held the first Quarterly Conference, had a very good congregation on Sunday. The amount required of this circuit for the pastor's salary this year is 375 dollars. Bro. Cottingham receives 275 dollars and one hundred dollars is to be paid me. The amount I received at this Quarterly Conference was \$7.05.

Feb. 27th. Today I preached at Cuero. There was a little circumstance that made me feel bad. It was this: An old school Presbyterian preacher during last week had made an appointment at this time and place, tho' my appointment had been outstanding for four weeks, but it seems he did not know it. When he stepped in at the door, I was standing up reading Hymns.

He stood for one moment like he was thunderstruck, then took a seat, and I preached.

March 5th. Yesterday I preached at Lyons to twelve or fourteen women and three men. When I think of the home I have left, and the friends who are far away, I feel that I have indeed left all to follow Christ.

March 12th. Today about six o'clock p. m. my horse laid down to rise no more. Don't know how I am to get to my appointment Friday unless I walk, or can borrow a horse, which is doubtful.

March 26th. At last I succeeded in getting a horse to ride, a spoiled Spanish thing. I have saved two appointments I expected to lose. . . .

April 1st. I preached the first sermon that has ever been preached on Mulberry Creek.

April 4th. Went to Bro. Chambliss' and found that Br. Cottingham had purchased a horse for me from a Mexican cava-yard—a pretty good horse. Bro. Cottingham's family not being well, I started around the Circuit to fill his appointments as well as my own. The year is stealing away and I have done no studying of any importance.

The slender entries of a journal may be supplemented by extracts from some of Addison's letters:

Our Q. M. closed last sunday evening we had a tolerably cold time of it. There is no appearance of a revival on this ct but I hope for better things soon. . . . I wish I could give you an exact account of this ct. it is a four weeks ct. but it has rained so much that I have only went around it once. but expect to start again tomorrow and will get back here in two weeks: there are something like twenty appointments in all. or will be when they are all made out. I think of all the cts in the Conf—this is one of the greatest for having a few of all kinds of people in it. from Methodists down to Papists. not forgetting Campbellites, and almost every kind of ite and ism in the Creation. and they are all as hidebound as the Devil himself.

(April 25th). I do not know what to say about Br. Cottingham He has rec'd news from Ark. that his moral char-

acter is impeached, & that if he is not there at His trial, it will be very apt to go hard with him, but it is impossible for him to get there in time. he talks of locating on the Bay and going into stock raising. . . . He appears to have lost all his zeal, and in a great measure, to have backslidden. some of the official members have begun to lose confidence in him. they think, which is the truth, that he is too careless about preaching, that he spends all his spare time fishing. Think not that I say this with any other feelings than of deep regret, for I feel much hurt at the course he thinks of pursuing, but I cannot help it.

(May 7th). I presume you have heard that the folks have built a fine academy in Hallettsville and are going to establish a school. they have employed a Methodist Preacher by the name of Spencer to take charge of it. the house cost them 4.000 dollars. I am no judge of such matters, but Spencer appears to be a well educated man fully competent to take charge of the "Alma Institute" (that is its name).

Another Methodist school? This is the only information we have of the "Alma Institute" at Hallettsville.

The minutes have shown that Charles Rottenstein withdrew from our ministry. He immediately joined the ranks of the Episcopal clergy, and one of our letters of this year gives a portrait of him in robes, as well as some attendant incidents of interest. The letter is from J. H. Addison, this year on Bastrop circuit, and dated Bastrop, May 11th (1853):

As there was a revival going on in Bastrop I came over yesterday and learned that Bishop Freeman (of the Episcopal Church) had sent an appt down to preach at night. Bro Whipple gave way for the Bishop, and expectation was on tip-toe to hear him. Well, at the appointed time the Bishop—in his black robe, and the Revs Messrs Rucker and Rottenstein in their white ones came sweeping down the isle with all the dignity that could be assumed I was so irreverant as to laugh at the appearance of "our Charley" he looked and acted so consequential. The service commenced by Rucker, the Bishop and Charley responding. . . . The Bishop took his text "Except ye be con-



verted and become as little children'' & c He commenced by stating that "there were many men who taught the doctrine that the sacrament of the Lords Supper was designed for none but those who had *assurance* of present acceptance, and that which was designed to impart all the assurance necessary, was withheld until that assurance was imparted. This assurance the men taught was preceded by deep remorse, or pungent conviction, and then by a joy and peace inexpressible, and men were deterred from approaching what those self-constituted teachers called *merely* the *emblems* of the broken body and shed blood of Christ, and as a warrant for this belief, they relied—among other passages—on the text selected by me, but I will leave it to the judgment of all present, after I am done, whether with just grounds. He then opened the subject first by presenting the meaning of the words "Kingdom of Heaven," declaring that in the passage under consideration it referred to the "church." Next the meaning of the word "converted" was defined to be a turning. . . . Hence the popular theory of the self-called and self-constituted teachers of the present day, that conversion was a change of heart, or the pardon of sin, was all wrong. . . . He then defined it—Conversion—to be a change in the mind, not by any inward impression but alone by the power of the man himself, a making himself righteous by his own actions. . . . Then is he fit for the sacrament. *This* is the evidence of Conversion, and no man know this save by receiving the sacraments. These are the appointed channels of God's grace and man need not look for any other. . . .

After he got done preaching he bowed and scraped and prayed, and pronounced the benediction and the Parsons had got down upon their knees to pray the congregation out of the house. Whipple jumped up and told them we would have a prayer meeting and asked them to stay. I tell you the Bishop and his aids, or laqueys left in a hurry and Whipple commenced I never have heard him come out as plain in my life. He told them that he believed and preached heart-felt religion and that those who trusted to any thing else might be in the fix of those who demanded admittance into Heaven on the score of their having taught in his name and in his name done many wonderful works. they might receive the sentence "I never knew you." We then had a real Methodist prayer meeting, and annoyed the

Bishop and company no little with our noise. they being at Halls could hear us very plain.

A great variety of subjects—persons, events and conditions—are discussed in the correspondence of several preachers of that day, which we have in much patience deciphered and sifted. We learn that early in the year 1853 George Rottenstein, editor of the *Banner*, yielded up the tripod, surrendered his credentials as a Methodist preacher, and followed his son Charles into the Episcopal ministry. There was great rejoicing apparently among the Methodist preachers, as the *Banner* and its editor had been growing more and more unpopular, and the paper was scarcely able to keep its head above water. Bro. S. B. Cameron, who had taken the supernumerary relation at the previous conference, and had moved to Houston, was temporarily placed in charge of the paper.

A letter from Chappell Hill says that the school is prosperous; that the people had all united to sustain it; attendance, about ninety pupils, "all under good discipline," and more than one hundred expected before the end of the session. A new church expected to be completed before the end of the year.

A very remarkable expression of temperance sentiment is recorded. "We in the Colorado valley are driving right ahead," says a writer, referring to temperance reform. "In the Corporation of Bastrop an election was ordered by the Mayor to test public sentiment in regard to the liquor traffic within the bounds of the Corporation. When the votes were counted out it stood one hundred and seventy three against licensing doggeries in the town to three in favor of it. In Webberville the citizens met, and appointed delegates to the state convention, and I believe we will be able to get a Maine liquor law passed by the next legislature."

Spiritualism was having an extensive vogue. "We have spiritual communications from the other world

plenty and I am of the opinion that many of the good folks of Burleson county will go totally deranged," writes J. E. Ferguson. "Dead men's spirits are called up with as much facility as one would whistle up a gang of dogs, and then the astonishing revelations that are made, why it is enough to harrow up the soul, freeze thy blood, and make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres."

This good year 1853 was the open season for the delegates to be elected to the ensuing General Conference, and the subject fills no little space in the communications of the preachers. A little conference politics now and then is relished by the best of men. "As to Deligates," says one, "I have nothing to say. I intend to vote if I get to Conference but some men and probably the choice of the Conference I never can vote for to fill responsible stations. . . . I would like to know that the young men of the Conference would seek out such as would not lay such burdens on our shoulders the next four years as we have borne these: but I look for it to be as in the days of Jeroboam The thigh will be substituted for the finger."

It was in the year 1853 that a new brick church was completed at Washington, erected and named in honor of Dr. Martin Ruter, the first superintendent of the Texas mission, who had died and was buried at Washington in 1838. Early in May of this year the remains of Dr. Ruter were removed from the old burying ground and re-interred at a spot adjacent to the new church. J. E. Ferguson, who was present on the occasion, thus writes of the events of the day:

I have been to Washington to the re-enterment of Dr- Ruter since I wrote to you, where I met with Bros Alexander, Kinney, Peel & Lewis The excessive rain, and other causes had a bad influence upon the exercises of the occasion about fifty to eighty masons were in the procession. Nothing but his bones remained. the Coffin was entirely decayed. His wig was entire, and his teeth looked natural, but nothing remained of the great and

good man but the skeleton. The eye was gone from beneath the massive and noble brow. The tongue of eloquence had mouldered to the clay. The large and ardent heart was no more the thing of life, but like other parts of his body had crumbled to dust. The soul was gone, the dust remained to us to honor. I felt while we were handling his dust that if he was not displeased with us he pitied the empty pageantry of earth Bro Kinney made a complete failure in the eulogy, and Crawford's oration was without points the Collection was meager, only about 275\$. But Judge Felder has agreed to seat the house and finish the belfry &C &C.

In 1853 Methodism took a new start in San Antonio and Corpus Christi, according to reports published by the Missionary Society of the Church, South.<sup>1</sup> Lewis B. Whipple was the preacher at San Antonio, and Henderson S. Lafferrty was at Corpus Christi: "The city of San Antonio," says the Report, "has hitherto been rather a barren field upon which we have bestowed labor. But this year it has pleased God to bless the labors of his servants, and some 18 souls were happily converted to God. A noble two-story rock church edifice has been built, 35 by 60 feet. The upper room is used for divine worship. The basement (entirely above ground), for a schoolroom. In March last a church was organized in Corpus Christi by the missionary, which numbers 18 white and 6 colored members. The walls of the church building are pretty well up, and they have some of the materials for completing it."

The East Texas Conference met at Marshall on November 30, 1853, Bishop Andrew presiding, and John W. Fields secretary. Marshall C. Simpson, Bennett Elkins, A. W. Goodgion, Jas. A. Scruggs, William G. Coons, A. C. McDougald, James Greene, Calvin Cocke, John McMillan were admitted on trial—the largest class in the history of the conference, and Henderson D. Palmer, M. C. Robinson, and J. K. Hawkins were re-admitted. J. Johnson and Robt. Crawford located; Geo. W. Lents,

<sup>1</sup> Report of Missionary Society, 1854, pp. 84-85.



M. F. Cole and J. G. Hardin went on the supernumerary list, and Geo. West remained on the superannuated roll. Samuel W. Robbins was received by transfer from the Indian Mission Conference, and John W. Ellis, Sr., from the Alabama Conference.

The following delegates were elected to the General Conference, to meet the following year: S. A. Williams, O. Fisher, and Jefferson Shook; N. B. Burkes, reserve.

Four appointments in this conference have now reached the dignity of stations, namely, San Augustine, Henderson, Marshall, and Jefferson, although each place was also the head of a circuit. The membership in these stations was small—41 whites at San Augustine, 82 at Henderson, 70 at Marshall, and 43 at Jefferson. It was the day of great circuits, and some of the strongest men of the conference filled these circuits. Paris, Bonham, Greenville, Dallas, Grayson, Palestine, Tyler, Jacksonville, Clarksville and Cherokee were the great circuits of the conference, from the standpoint of membership, Paris standing at the head, with 784 white members, and 112 colored. The membership in the conference has reached a total of 9230 whites, and 1268 colored; increase during the year, 2227 whites and 310 colored—the best year yet.

The districts remain as last year, which, with their presiding elders, were as follows: San Augustine, J. T. P. Irvine; Marshall, N. W. Burkes; Clarksville, A. N. Ross; Palestine, O. Fisher; Woodville, Wm. K. Wilson.

The Texas Conference met at Huntsville, December 21, 1853. Bishop Andrew was in charge, and H. S. Thrall was elected secretary.

Fountain P. Ray, Absalom C. Delaplaine, Rufus Y. King, Henry D. Hubert, Williamson Williams, Thomas F. Windsor, and Augustus C. Fairman were admitted on trial. Transferred in: H. E. McElroy, from the Missouri Conference; Wm. G. Foote, from the Virginia Conference; Solomon S. Yarbrough, from the Tennessee Conference; William H. Seat and John H. Davidson, from the Mississippi Conference.



Two members of the conference had died during the year: William Young and Simon B. Cameron.

William Young was born December 17, 1822, in Madison County, Alabama. He was converted and joined the Methodist Church in Benton County, Ala., in 1838. He was licensed to preach in 1844, and immediately took work by appointment of the presiding elder on Caffeeville circuit. In the fall of 1844 he was received on trial into the Memphis Conference. In the fall of 1845 he transferred to the Texas Conference. During his brief ministry in Texas he served on the Nashville, San Antonio, Austin and Bastrop, Seguin and San Antonio, and again San Antonio charges. During the year 1850 his health failed, and in the fall of that year he took the supernumerary relation. At the close of the next year he was superannuated. He returned to Mississippi, and in March, 1853, he was married to Miss Eliza M. Sims. His health had greatly improved, and he expected soon to return to Texas and resume his place in the ministry. But in the latter part of the year he fell into a rapid decline. He died in Mississippi on February 18, 1853. Bro. Young was described as a man of vigorous mind, of fine tastes, and as a preacher his ministrations were often highly spiritual and awakening. The people always heard him gladly.

Simon B. Cameron was a native of Ohio. He entered the travelling connection in Kentucky, where he labored two years, then came to Texas in feeble health. He entered the Texas Conference in December, 1850. He served one year in Houston, and one at Austin. He then took a supernumerary relation, and removed to Houston. He was for a few months editor of the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*. He was stricken with yellow fever in Houston, and died there on October 2, 1853, leaving a wife and one child.

Delegates elected to the General Conference: R. Alexander, H. S. Thrall, James M. Wesson and J. W. Whipple; William A. Smith and William C. Lewis, reserves.

The Texas Conference closes the quadrennium with a total membership of 6234 whites and 1687 colored, showing an increase over the previous year of 1397 whites and 301 colored. The membership for the two conferences now standing, 15,464 whites and 2955 colored—number of local preachers in Texas Conference, 104, number in East Texas Conference not given. The Texas Conference covers a much wider territory—everything west of the Trinity River, and has six districts and—not including these and special appointments—has sixty-two regularly listed appointments. The East Texas Conference has five districts, and only forty regularly listed appointments; but as shown, the membership in the East Texas Conference far exceeds that in the Texas Conference, showing the comparative density of population. The Texas Conference has no such populous circuits as are found in the eastern portion of the state. And strange to say the charge that stands up toward the head of the list in the west is one of the newer black land circuits—Waxahachie, with a white membership of 337. The leading circuits in the conference are, in the order of membership: Bastrop, 393; Waxahachie, 337; Caldwell (formerly the old Nashville), 301; Anderson 276; Huntsville, 258; Leona, 247; Goliad, 221, and Belton, 200.

The minutes of the Texas Conference for 1853 show that two new schools had come into being—Andrew Female College, at Huntsville, to which James M. Follansbee was appointed principal, and Paine Female Institute, at Goliad, with A. B. F. Kerr as agent, in connection with his appointment as pastor. The minutes also show that Robert Alexander was not only presiding elder of the Huntsville district, but he was also “agent of Chappell Hill Institute and Andrew Female College.” We have, then, existing at the same time five schools within the bounds of the Texas Conference—namely, at Huntsville, Chappell Hill, Bastrop, Goliad, and Ruttersville, as the last named had not yet closed its doors, or been transferred to other hands. The East Texas Conference had

two—Fowler Institute at Henderson, and McKenzie College, near Clarksville. It is little wonder that we find talk of concentration going on in the Texas Conference, and that such sentiments should find expression within a few months in the projection of a “central university,” to be located at Chappell Hill. The school at Chappell Hill soon came to be the most prosperous in the conference. Originally started under the name of “Chappell Hill Male and Female Institute” in 1850, it was reorganized in the fall of 1852 and its name changed to “Chappell Hill College.” An announcement issued in the winter of 1852–53 says: “The next Spring Session will commence on Monday the 7th of March, 1853. Both departments of the College are under the superintendence of Prof. P. S. Ruter, late of Transylvania University, Ky. . . . The Female Department occupies a new and spacious building, 50 feet by 24 in size, two stories high, and at some two hundred yards distance from the former one.” The Female Department was in charge of Miss Elizabeth Knox, of Pittsburg, Pa., while Miss Charlotte Ruter was in charge of the music department. President Ruter and Miss Charlotte Ruter were children of Dr. Martin Ruter, as was also A. W. Ruter, who came to Texas about this time and engaged in teaching.

Other information given in this announcement includes “Tuition Fee for Session of Five Months,” as follows:

For Reading and Spelling .....	\$8 00
“ Writing and First Lessons in Arithmetic .....	10 00
“ Arithmetic, Geography, English Grammar, Composition or Declamation .....	12 00
“ History, Geology, Logic, Rhetoric, Moral or Mental Philosophy .....	15 00
“ Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, Physiology, Algebra, Geometry, Latin, Greek, or the higher branches of Mathematics .....	20 00
“ French or Hebrew languages, each extra .....	10 00
“ Music, Pianoforte, with use of instrument .....	25 00
“ Drawing, Painting, or Embroidery, each extra .....	10 00

Board for girls and young ladies can be obtained in good families at \$8 to \$10 dollars per month.—For young men and boys, at \$7 to \$10, according to accommodations.

Students from a distance are requested to bring with them whatever school books they have. These will be used as far as practicable. Whatever new ones are required can be had at the stores in town.

The two Departments of the College, (male and female), are kept distinct and apart, with no intercommunication, save through the officers of the Institution.

Rev. Bryan L. Peel has been appointed travelling agent for the College, to raise funds with a view to the endowment of the Professional Chairs.

For any further information desired, address President Ruter, Chappell Hill, Washington County, Texas.

By order of the Board of Trustees,

R. J. SWEARINGEN, *Chairman.*

T. WOOLDRIDGE, *Sec.*

As the Chappell Hill community and church became one of the famous centers of Methodism during this period, it might be of interest to transcribe here a part of the contents of the "Church Book" for 1853, which has been preserved and has fallen into our hands. In common with all church records of that day, this book is prefaced by a "charge to the membership," this one containing the following:

Brethren be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Remember the Friday preceeding each Quarterly Meeting as a day of fasting and prayer, for the general prosperity of Zion.

Also pray for us your Ministers, that the words of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified.

November 9th 1853.

A. M. Box P. C.

JAMES M. WESSON, P. E.

The membership is listed under the following heads, the male members appearing first:

No.	Male Members	Life	Soul	Remarks
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and under the headings "Life" and "Soul" initials are set down to indicate the state of life—married, single, widowed—and the state of soul.

## The membership roll is as follows:

No.	Male Members	Life	Soul	Remarks
1.	William Keesee, CL & St.....	W	B	
2.	B. L. Peel, LE CL & St.....	M	B	Travelling preacher now
3.	James S. Hanna, St.....	M	B	Removed by letter up the Brazos
4.	Joseph W. Routt, St.....	M	B	
5.	J. A. Hargrove, St.....	S	B	
6.	Lod Robinson, CL.....	M	B	
7.	Jesse W. Glass, CL.....	M	B	
8.	Hiram M. Glass, LP.....	M	B	
9.	D. A. Bland, Ex.....	S	B	
10.	Dr. R. J. Swearingen, St.....	M	B	
11.	Frederick Ray.....	S	B	
12.	Kedar Ballard.....	W	B	
13.	James Glass.....	M	B	
14.	James Chappell.....	M	B	
15.	Andrew H. Glass.....	M	B	
16.	George W. Keesee.....	M	B	
17.	Robert W. Keesee.....	M	B	
18.	C. Witteburg.....	S	B	
19.	Joel J. Wilburn.....	M	B	
20.	A. J. Robinson.....	M	B	
21.	S. W. Punchard.....	M	B	
22.	James Levi.....	M	B	
23.	W. W. Woodward, St.....	M	B	Wishes to resign; better let him, I reckon
24.	Robert P. Ashford.....	M	B	
25.	Joshua Fielding.....	S	B	Remove by letter
26.	Joseph Davis.....	S	B	Removed
27.	John May.....	S	S	
28.	John Cochran.....	S	B	
29.	Wm. E. Ballard.....	S	B	
30.	Wesley Glass, Pro.....	S	S	
31.	Thos. Keesee, Pro.....	S	B	
32.	Gideon Keesee, Pro.....	S	S	
33.	William D. Hargrove, Pro.....	S	S	
34.	James S. Turner, Pro.....	S	B	
35.	William Keesee, Jr., Pro.....	S	B	
36.	A. J. Jackson, Pro.....	S	B	
37.	Thos. W. Glass, Pro.....	S	B	
38.	H. S. Hedrick, Pro.....	S	B	
39.	Charles B. Harris, Pro.....	S	S	
40.	M. P. Wilson, Pro.....	S	B	
41.	Robert D. Glass.....	S	B	
42.	John M. Glaze.....	S	B	
43.	Caleb Wyman.....	S	B	
44.	Richard Crawford.....	M	B	Joined by letter Dec. 18th, 1853, from Miss. good stock
45.	James B. Degges.....	M	B	
46.	Robert F. Degges.....	M	B	
47.	Thos. McCown, Pro.....	S	B	
48.	Fletcher Glass, Pro.....	S	B	
49.	W. M. Baker.....	S	B	
50.	Zeno. Carpenter.....	S	B	
51.	J. W. Dodley.....	M	B	
52.	Henry Feelen.....	S	B	



Following this list of "Male Members" is the roll of "Female Members," listed under the same heads, and numbering fifty-six names. On succeeding pages is the roll of "Coloured Members," numbering eighty-nine, with sundry additions following. The following is an extract from the colored roll:

Owners	Members	
Mrs. Hubert, s.	1. Joe	
"	2. John	
"	3. Judah	
"	4. Cynthia	Dead
"	5. Lucinda	Belongs to Frank
"	6. Reme	
"	7. Caroline	Belongs to Frank
"	8. Jane	
Frank Hubert, s.	9. Wiley	
Wm. Keesee, s.	10. Cubit	Drinks
"	11. Franky	
"	12. Jimmy	
"	13. Sarah	
"	14. Joe	
"	15. Missouri, Pro.	

We have also *class* books of the Chappell Hill and other old societies, when the class-meeting was in its day. In these the members are enrolled as in the church book, their "state of life" and "state of soul" being designated, with the addition of their presence or absence noted at weekly class-meetings through the year.

The third General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was held at Columbus, Ga., in May, 1854. Among its membership appear for the first time some men who are just rising into prominence, and who later are to link the old generation with the new. Among these were E. M. Marvin, H. N. McTyeire, and John C. Keener. But many of the towering figures of a former period had not yet fallen out. Joshua Soule was now seventy-three years of age, and was very feeble. Bishops Andrew and Capers were also well advanced in years. Bishop Paine was at the height of his strength and usefulness, but he was the only one of our general superin-

tendents who had yet the promise of many years of labor. The General Conference, therefore, deemed it necessary to add new life to the episcopacy, and accordingly three new bishops were elected, as follows: George F. Pierce, of Georgia, John Early, of Virginia, and Hubbard H. Kavanaugh, of Kentucky.

A long period of litigation over the publishing interests of the Church, North and South, had resulted in a decision in favor of the Church, South. The total sum inherited by this decision amounted to \$275,000, and the decision was at once made to invest this sum in a publishing establishment of our own. The city of Nashville, Tenn., was chosen as the location of the enterprise, and in consequence that city soon came to be recognized as the headquarters of our Church. Rev. Edward Stevenson and Rev. F. A. Owen were elected the first publishing agents. Depositories were opened in other cities, including one at Galveston, Texas. Thomas O. Summers was elected book editor; D. S. Doggett, editor of the *Quarterly Review*; J. B. McFerrin was elected editor of the *Christian Advocate* (Nashville), and C. C. Gillespie was elected editor of the *Texas Christian Advocate*, successor of the *Texas Wesleyan Banner*, and the Texas organ was moved from Houston to Galveston, and with a book depository and the Texas church paper located there, the Island City was for a few years to be looked upon as Methodist headquarters in Texas.

The fifteenth session of the Texas Conference was held at Chappell Hill on December 13, 1854. Bishop John Early, who had been elected to the episcopacy the preceding May, presided over this conference. Homer S. Thrall was elected secretary.

A class of ten were admitted on trial, as follows: Frederick Vordenbaumen, John W. Cope, Jas. W. Points, T. B. Buckingham, August Engel, Chas. L. Spencer, Gustavus Elly, John R. White, John C. Kopp, Anthony Warns. The following were readmitted, all in elder's

orders: James McLeod, Robert L. Drake, G. W. Cottingham, Andrew Davis, P. M. Yell, Wm. G. Foot, J. W. Ledbetter. Wm. L. Kidd located. Jesse F. Walsh was received by transfer from the Memphis Conference, and Byron S. Carden and Hiram G. Carden from the Arkansas Conference.

Three preachers had died during the year—Garrett L. Patton, Marcus L. Smock and John W. Addison.

Garrett L. Patton was a native of Tennessee. Admitted on trial into the Tennessee Conference in 1842, and was transferred to the Alabama Conference. Transferred to the Texas Conference in 1851, and appointed to the Springfield district. At the end of one year he was appointed to the Galveston station, and died while serving that charge. His memoir characterizes him as “a good man, a close student, a man of varied information and a useful preacher.”

John W. Addison, as we have seen, was the youngest of three brothers who had entered the Texas Conference. He was born in Baltimore, Md., in 1828, the son of Isaac S. and Sarah Addison, and was brought to Texas as a child with the family in 1835, and settled in Burleson County. The family was one of primitive culture, and of piety after the old-fashioned Methodist order—devoted and loyal to every rule and custom of the Church. Following the course of two older brothers, Oscar M. and James H., John Wesley Addison was first licensed as a local preacher, and in 1852 was admitted on trial into the Texas Conference. His first appointment was Hallettsville circuit. We have already given extracts from his journal and letters while on this work. At the conference at Huntsville in 1853 he was appointed to Lynchburg circuit. His letters during 1854 reveal very hard and trying conditions existing on this charge, often discouraging to a young man. From one of his last letters, dated Lynchburg, November 2, 1854, we extract the following, addressed to his brother Oscar, in far-away Brownsville:

Through the blessing of a kind Providence I can report myself well, and willing to do my duty, and the only thing I have cause to grumble at, is my own fruitlessness: I do know that I might have done better. I feel a degree of self accusation that I have not been more devoted, but as our failings may be used for profit, and as it is useless to spend the time in vain regrets, will you not pray for me, that I may remember the past only to improve? . . . I coincide with you in your observation about Ministers possessing a spirit different to those around them, and I would that I had all the mind that was in Christ; then should I be better able to dispense the word of life to those who are making their way to eternal ruin. . . .

The Yellow Fever has not been in Harrisburg, that I have heard of, but it has been and is still in Houston & Galveston; there was a death in this place some said from yellow fever, and one reputed case in town now, but I do not much believe it, there have been no other cases in any part of my work, I think we will have frost in a few days, and I hope the fever will disappear.

Our 4th Q M is to be held in this place the 18th & 19th inst. and that will close my labors on Lynchburg Circuit. Jimmy F's meeting comes on the week after and I think I shall visit him, and if the Lynchburg Circuit Rider can get a chance he may hold forth to the citizens of Houston. . . .

Before this reaches you I expect to be on the way to Chappel Hill. I have sold my horse, and shall have to go up on the stage from Houston. I presume you will come by water to Galveston & H. and take the stage from there, I would like to fall in with you if you do either at this place or Houston. . . .

I feel like I wanted to be more devoted to the Saviour, that I want to love him more. O Lord revive thy work in my heart, fill me with Thyself

Let all I am in the be lost  
Let all be lost in God

May God prepare your heart and mine for our work, is the prayer of your Bro

JNO

The last entries made in his journal give an account of his visit to Houston, at the close of his year's work, on his way to conference:

Nov. 22d. I came up from Lynchburg to Houston last night on a boat, a very disagreeable trip, boat was so crowded. Went to the parsonage and stayed with Bro. Jim Ferguson, spent the night at the vestry.

Nov. 23d. Went to see Bro. Shearn during the day, and stayed with Ferguson at night.

Nov. 24th. Visited different families today and met at night with the Good Samaritans and Daughters of Samaria.

Nov. 26th. Heard Bro. Kennon preach at eleven o'clock. Attended Quarterly Conference in the afternoon, and I preached at night.

Nov. 30th. Heard Bro. Fairbairn preach a Thanksgiving sermon, and at night heard Ferguson preach his farewell sermon.

Dec. 1st. Still in Houston. At night I went to the Lodge.  
Saturday, 2d. (No entry, and here the record closes.)

On Sunday, December 3, Bro. Ferguson, the pastor, went to the country, and arranged with J. W. Addison to fill the day in Houston. While in the pulpit at 11 o'clock Sunday morning Addison was taken violently ill. A letter from Charles Shearn to James H. Addison, dated Houston, December 15th, may well be used to give the account of the sad and sudden closing of the young preacher's career:

You have before this heard all Particulars Respecting the Sickness and Death of your Brother—I have written to several Brethren and I should have Wrote to you but for the Reason We fully expected your Brother here from Brownsville. Presuming now he has gone by Land I am of necessity compelled to write for it is Doubtful if I come to Conference or not. . . . Your Brother was taken sick in the pulpit at morning Service



the 3 Inst, and on thursday morning at 10 minutes before 3 o'clock he Expired, we gave him the best attention possible, and you may Rest assured that nothing could have been done more than was done, we had two Physitians frequently coming in, as friends, and the best we could get Hired as the Praetitioner—he told me he was as well Prepared for the Change now as he would ever be. If it was the Will of God to take him now, It was his will to go. We buried him on the evening of thursday and a very large procession there was—Rev'd Mr Fairbairn Performed the Funeral services in the Church and the Good Samaritans at the grave. . . . We buried him in his best suit of clothes, a new pair of Black Broad Cloth pants, a new Satin vest, and his best coat. his trunk is at my House. . . . Brother Hardecastle and myself . . . Packed up all we found in his trunk. . . . His watch if I come to the Conference I will Bring with me. the amount of money he left is \$37—25—I have paid for funeral expences—all the difference which is small, I am Willing to bear . . . he left a New Silk hatt, and a very good Panama—the Silk one he has scarcely ever worn . . . we found but very few books. he left a fine new overcoat.

The most important action taken at the Texas Conference in 1854 was that looking toward the establishment of a "central university" for Texas Methodism. A committee was appointed to which this project was referred. The committee was composed of R. W. Kennon, Robert Alexander, J. W. Whipple, H. S. Thrall, D. Morse, J. M. Wesson, W. H. Seat, J. S. McGee, and M. Yell. This committee came together in Galveston on April 1, 1855, and promptly selected Chappell Hill as the location of the proposed university. The following session of the Texas Conference, held in Galveston in December, 1855, ratified the action of the committee as to location, named the prospective institution "Soule University," and elected a board of trustees and a financial agent. Further than this we shall see when we get on into the year 1856.

As the conference at Chappell Hill begins a new

quadrennium, following our plan, and in order to keep up with the preachers and the various charges, we shall give a detailed view of the statistical tables and the appointments: The membership statistics reported at that conference were as follows:

## GALVESTON DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Galveston.....	172	....	1
Galveston German Mission.....	75	....	1
Galveston Colored Mission.....	....	75	1
Houston.....	109		
Houston Colored Mission.....	....	13	2
Lynchburg.....	44	12	1
Columbia and Brazoria.....	75	150	
Oyster Creek Colored Mission.....	36	136	
Richmond.....	123	78	
San Felipe.....	134	150	1
Matagorda.....	20	13	
	788	727	7

## RUTERSVILLE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Rutersville and Lagrange.....	268	50	7
Navidad Mission.....	85	4	3
Columbus.....	74	10	
Brenham.....	182	23	5
Wheelock.....	174	10	4
Caldwell.....	208	16	6
Cameron.....	146	32	4
Caldwell Colored Mission.....	....	30	
Egypt.....	64	41	1
	1201	216	36

## HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Huntsville.....	80	40	1
Cold Springs.....	71	28	
Montgomery.....	136	9	3
Trinity Mission.....	26		
Leona.....	207	50	3
Anderson.....	72	41	1
Retreat.....	101	62	3
Rock Island.....	26	72	
Washington.....	68	94	2
Chappell Hill.....	120	65	2
	907	461	15

## SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Springfield.....	305	50	5
Waxahachie.....	482	17	7
Cedar Hill.....	150	....	2
Waco.....	249	....	5
Alton Mission.....	60	....	2
Belton.....	249	....	7
Centerville.....	148	9	1
	1643	76	29

## VICTORIA DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Victoria Sta. ....	33		
Goliad. ....	56	10	1
Pt. Lavacca and Indianola. ....	25	16	1
Cibolo. ....	35	8	
Texana. ....	112	20	
Brownsville. ....	9	1	
Lavacca Ct. ....	105	16	3
Coletto Ct. ....	75	15	
Corpus Christi. ....	24	11	
Gonzales. ....	103	....	1
	577	97	6

## AUSTIN DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Austin Sta. ....	60	30	
Austin Ct. ....	227	12	3
Bastrop Sta. ....	112	35	5
Bastrop Ct. ....	136	42	3
Seguin. ....	130	30	1
San Marcos. ....	290	120	7
San Antonio. ....	43	7	1
Medina Mission. ....	25		
Georgetown. ....	108	2	3
Fredericksburg German Mission. ....	105	....	2
New Braunfels German Mission. ....	54	....	2
	1290	278	27

*Recapitulation*

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
This year. ....	6406	1855	114
Last year. ....	6234	1687	104
Increase. ....	172	168	10

The following were the appointments made in 1854:

#### GALVESTON DISTRICT

R. W. KENNON, P. E.

Galveston, to be supplied  
 " Col'd Mis "  
 " Ger Mis, Peter Moelling  
 Houston Sta & Af. Mis., Lewis B. Whipple  
 Lynchburg, Williamson Williams  
 Union Chapel Ct., to be supplied  
 Colored Mission, Wm. C. Lewis  
 Richmond & Col'd Mission, James McLeod  
 Columbia & Brazoria, Ivey H. Cox  
 Oyster Creek & Col'd Mis., James W. Points  
 Brazoria Col'd Mis., to be supplied  
 Old Caney Col'd Mis., to be supplied  
 Matagorda, to be supplied.

#### RUTERSVILLE DISTRICT

HOMER S. THRELL, P. E.

Rutersville, B. W. Dashiell  
 Lagrange, to be supplied  
 Navidad, Geo. W. Tittle  
 Columbus, J. H. D. Moore  
 Fredericks'bg & Industry, F. Vordenbaumen  
 Brenham, Jno. H. Davidson  
 Bellville Ger. Mis., August Engel  
 Egypt Ct., and Col'd Miss., Geo. S. Gatewood  
 Caldwell, J. W. DeVilbiss  
 " Col'd Miss., to be sup.  
 Cameron, T. B. Buckingham  
 Belton, Wm. H. Hubert

#### HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

SOLOMON S. YARBOROUGH, P. E.

Huntsville, F. A. McShan, Jas. M. Follansbee, Prin. Andrew Female College  
 Cold Spring, B. S. Carden  
 Montgomery, to be supplied  
 Madisonville Ct., H. D. Hubert  
 Anderson, C. L. Spencer  
 Retreat, C. H. Brooks  
 Washington, A. B. F. Kerr  
 " Col'd Miss., to be sup.  
 Chappell Hill, O. M. Addison  
 Brazos Col'd Miss., Thos. Wooldridge  
 Bryant L. Peel, Agent for Chappell Hill Female College  
 Robert Alexander, Agent American Bible Society

Francis Wilson and J. W. Chalk transferred to East Texas Conference. J. F. Walsh transferred back to Memphis Conference. Next conference to be held at Galveston, Dec. 12, 1855.

A. M. Box, Agent Conference Tract Society

#### AUSTIN DISTRICT

DANIEL MORSE, P. E.

Austin, James M. Wesson  
 " Ct., Thos. F. Windsor  
 Onion Creek, Wm. A. Smith  
 Bastrop, I. G. John  
 " Ct., & Col'd Miss., to be supplied  
 San Marcos, Wm. P. Read  
 San Antonio, Jno. W. Phillips  
 " Ct., R. H. Belvin  
 Georgetown, Rufus Y. King  
 Hamilton Miss., Jno. W. Cope  
 New Braunfels & Castroville, H. P. Young, Gustavus Elly  
 Fredericks'bg & Llano, Charles Grote, John C. Kopp  
 Josiah W. Whipple, Agent for Bastrop Academy

#### SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

M. YELL, P. E.

Springfield, A. Davis  
 Wheelock, Wm. G. Nelms, Thos. G. Gilmore, Supny.  
 Waxahachie, J. W. Cooley  
 Cedar Mountain, L. J. Wright  
 Fort Worth Miss., to be sup.  
 Lexington, F. P. Ray  
 Waco, James H. Addison  
 Bosque, Jno R. White  
 Centreville, H. G. Carden

#### VICTORIA DISTRICT

J. E. FERGUSON, P. E.

Victoria & Goliad, Geo. W. Cottingham, and Agent Paine Female Institute  
 Port Lavacca & Indianola, Robt. L. Drake  
 Helena, Jno. S. McGee  
 Gonzales, Wm. H. Seat  
 Texana, Joshua H. Shapard  
 Coletto, H. S. Lafferty  
 Clear Creek Ger. Miss., E. Schneider  
 Victoria Ger. Miss., Anthon Warns  
 Nueces Miss., A. C. Fairman  
 Corpus Christi, J. G. Johnson  
 Brownsville Miss., to be sup.  
 Laredo Miss., to be sup.



The East Texas Conference met at Tyler on November 29, 1854, some two weeks before the session of the Texas Conference. Bishop Early presided, and John W. Fields was elected secretary. The conference met in a new church just completed, at Tyler, which was dedicated by Bishop Early on Sunday, and called "Andrew Chapel."

The following were admitted on trial: West D. Lovelady, Robert C. Mount, Laban B. Hickman, J. W. H. Hamill, Lewis C. Crouse, Milton H. Porter, Wm. E. Bates, Wm. A. Stovall, Abner Brown, and Solomon T. Bridges. Job M. Baker and Johnson McMillan located. J. W. Ellis was transferred back to the Alabama Conference, and Francis Wilson and J. W. Chalk came from the Texas Conference, and Levi R. Dennis was received by transfer from the Tennessee Conference, Wm. Monk from the Alabama Conference, and John S. Noble from the Indian Mission Conference. M. F. Cole, Samuel W. Robins and F. G. Fawcett took the supernumerary relation, and Francis Wilson (just re-transferred from the Texas Conference), J. G. Hardin, Robert Crawford, J. T. P. Irvine, E. P. Chisholm, and Henry Fullingen, were placed on the superannuated list.

The following are the membership statistics reported at this conference:

## SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
San Augustine Ct.....	119	45	1
San Augustine Sta.....	66	35	
Jasper Ct.....	298	42	6
Shelbyville Ct.....	248	....	3
Panola Ct.....	210	10	2
Henderson Ct.....	339	60	5
Henderson Sta.....	51	35	1
Salem Ct.....	177	16	4
Nacogdoches.....	470	85	5
	1978	328	27

## PALESTINE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Palestine Ct. ....	317	23	3
Jacksonville Ct. ....	742	75	13
Tyler Ct. ....	611	72	15
Vanzant Ct. ....	180	7	1
Kaufman Ct. ....	147	14	1
Athens Mission. ....	102		
	2099	191	33

## MARSHALL DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Marshall Sta. ....	110	....	1
Marshall Ct. ....	661	5	5
Jefferson Ct. ....	508	89	9
Sulphur Mission. ....	100	4	2
Mt. Pleasant Ct. ....	521	46	8
Gilmer. ....	400	12	3
Harrison Co. African Mission. ....	....	425	
Wood Co. Mission. ....	67	16	2
Cypress Mission. ....	234	5	2
	2601	602	32

## CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Clarksville Ct. ....	507	28	14
Paris Ct. ....	828	159	7
Bonham Ct. ....	295	7	3
Greenville Ct. ....	325	....	9
Dallas Ct. ....	551	23	12
Grayson Ct. ....	261	1	6
	2767	218	51

## WOODVILLE DISTRICT

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
Woodville Mission.....	112	13	
Marion.....	56		
Liberty Sta.....	50	65	
Livingston Ct.....	125	21	1
Liberty Ct.....	18	3	
Crockett.....	271	23	6
Beaumont and Sabine Pass.....	No	report	
Madison Ct.....	38	24	3
	670	149	10

*Recapitulation*

	Whites	Colored	Local Preachers
This year.....	10,115	1488	153
Last year.....	9,230	1268	139
Increase.....	885	220	14

It is seen at once that this had been a year of prosperity in the East Texas Conference, and a glance at the tables reveals that the Church has had its greatest development in the northern and western portions of the conference. The tables will also show the location of the "black belt," Marshall district leading all others in its colored membership. The tables of the Texas Conference also show that the strength of the Church was drifting more and more to the north and west, while the black population is confined mainly to the plantation regions of the lower country.

The following are the appointments made at Tyler in 1854:

#### SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

ORCENETH FISHER, P. E.  
 San Augustine Ct., Alexander  
 Henkle, Robert C. Mount  
 Shelbyville, Geo. C. Lentz  
 Panola, Marshall C. Simpson  
 Pulaski, A. W. Goodgion  
 Henderson, J. B. Tullis  
 " Ct., West D. Lovelady  
 Salem, Wm. Craig  
 Nacogdoches, H. D. Palmer, H. C.  
 McElroy  
 J. C. Woolam, Agent Fowler In-  
 stitute

#### CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT

JAMES R. BELLAMY, P. E.  
 Clarksville & McKenzie, Milton H.  
 Porter  
 Red River, Andrew Cumming  
 Clarksville Col'd Miss., E. F.  
 Thwing  
 Boston, John McMillan  
 Paris, M. C. Robinson, H. W. Cum-  
 ming  
 Bonham, J. W. Chalk, F. G. Faw-  
 cett, supny  
 Grayson, F. H. Medaris, Wm. A.  
 Stovall  
 Alton, Wm. E. Bates  
 Dallas, Alex Dixon, L. C. Crouse  
 Greenville, Jesse S. Vann  
 Sulphur Ct., Bennett Elkins

#### TYLER DISTRICT

JOHN W. FIELDS, P. E.  
 Palestine, Neil Brown  
 Anderson, Solomon T. Bridges

Jackson, Wm. Monk, L. B. Hickman  
 Tyler, Francis M. Stovall, Abner  
 Brown  
 Garden Valley, Wm. E. George  
 Vanzant, to be supplied  
 Millwood, J. A. Scruggs  
 Kaufman, Wm. McCarty  
 Athens, S. D. Sansom

#### WOODVILLE DISTRICT

W. K. WILSON, P. E.  
 Woodville Miss., J. K. Hawkins  
 Marion Miss., James Grave  
 Cherokee, J. Shook  
 Crockett, A. L. Kavanaugh, one to  
 be supplied  
 Livingstone, S. C. Box  
 Liberty, J. L. Angel  
 Madison, Calvin Cocke  
 Newton, Acton Young  
 Jasper, Wm. P. Sansom

#### MARSHALL DISTRICT

N. W. BURKES, P. E.  
 Harrison Ct., Jno. N. Hamill  
 " Col'd Miss., P. W. Hobbs  
 Jefferson, Sam'l W. Robins, super-  
 numerary  
 Dangerfield, A. N. Ross  
 Linden, H. B. Hamilton, M.  
 F. Cole, Supny.  
 Mt. Pleasant, Sam'l Lynch  
 Wood Co. Mis., N. S. Johnson  
 Gilmer, D. M. Stovall  
 Coffeerville, J. W. Hamill  
 Upham, A. C. McDougald

Orceneth Fisher transferred to California in April, 1855, and spent several years on the Pacific Coast, but finally returned to Texas. Fisher, as we have seen, first came to Texas in the winter of 1839, supplying Brazoria circuit for a few months; and thus he is to be numbered among that earliest company of preachers who labored in Texas before the organization of the first conference. He returned to Illinois, but after a year or two he moved his family to Texas and regularly took work here. He

was born in Vermont (1803), and began his ministry in Ohio. His first wife having died after coming to Texas, in 1848 he was married to Rebecca Gilliland, one of the survivors of an Indian tragedy, recounted in a former chapter. At the time of their marriage Fisher was forty-five and his wife seventeen years of age. After a few years in California Fisher returned and finished his course in Texas. His widow still lives, at the age of ninety-three, residing in Austin. A son by his first marriage, O. A. Fisher, became a member of the Texas Conference, and a grandson, Sterling Fisher, perpetuates the name in our ministerial ranks. Orceneth Fisher was one of the greatest preachers of his day, and was especially noted for his exposition and defense of Methodist "doctrines." He was the author of a large volume on "The Christian Sacraments."



## CHAPTER XXII

### THE YEARS 1854-1857

THE period covering the middle fifties—from 1854 to 1858—was one marked by unusual development in Texas, and by a hitherto unequaled prosperity in the Church. It was an era of great increase in population, and of an increasing drift westward, to the great open country in the western and northwestern portions of the state. Twenty-seven new counties were organized during these years, among which were Coryell, Comanche, Bosque, Erath, Brown, Lampasas, Hamilton, San Saba, and the counties of Palo Pinto, Montague and Wise on the northwestern frontier. This period saw the first railroad building in Texas, and resulting from this many new centers of population and trade arose. The first railroad was called the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railway. The line was later incorporated into the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio railroad, a part of the Southern Pacific system. The road was completed from Harrisburg to Richmond, on the Brazos, in 1855, a distance of thirty-two miles. The Brazos River at Richmond was bridged with “a cheap pile bridge, only six feet above the water at low stage, the middle sections being removable on flat boats to permit the passage of steamboats and other vessels that occasionally navigated the river at that time.” This piece of engineering, descending from high banks on both sides, and swinging low in the middle, in the shape of a hammock, was said to have been a wonder in its day.

The Galveston and Red River Railway, afterwards the Houston & Texas Central, threw up its first grade out of Houston in 1853. The road reached Cypress City in 1856, twenty-five miles, and to Hockley, ten miles further, in 1857, to Hempstead in 1858, and to Millican in 1860, where it rested until a year or two after the war. The Washington County railroad, another link in the present H. & T. C. line, was built from Hempstead to Brenham in 1857-60. The Galveston, Houston & Henderson line was built from Galveston to Houston during the period 1854-58. A tap line from Houston connecting with the B. B. B. & C. Ry. was built by the city of Houston in 1856, seven miles. Other short lines projected or actually begun in the fifties were the Texas & New Orleans, the Eastern Texas, and the San Antonio & Mexican Gulf. The "Southern Pacific," afterwards the Texas & Pacific line, had twenty miles of road in operation about Marshall by 1858. The Transcontinental branch of the same road was begun near Texarkana in 1857, but only a small segment of the line was completed before the outbreak of the war. A "railroad map" of Texas, showing completions prior to the Civil War, gives a total construction of 492 miles. Most of this is in short lines radiating from Houston. We have not yet reached the railroad era in the state.

The minutes of the conferences during these years show that unusually large classes were being admitted on trial. The ranks of the ministry were largely augmented also by transfers coming into the state. We shall dispose of these conference sessions at once, before proceeding to a more detailed view of these busy years.

The East Texas Conference met at Marshall on November 21, 1855. Bishop George F. Pierce was president, and Neil Brown was elected secretary. Isaac W. Overall, William H. Crawford, Charles L. Hamill, Thomas W. Rogers, John F. Lard, John Stubblefield, Isaac B. Walker, Randle Odum, Martin Matthews, and Isaac Alex-

ander were admitted in trial—a class of ten, the same as the year before. Nearly as large a number located, as follows: Jesse S. Vann, Francis H. Maderis, Aiken N. Ross, Andrew Cumming, Alexander R. Dixon, John S. Noble, William Monk, and Jonathan K. Hawkins. Robert S. Finley was received by transfer from the Texas Conference.

The Texas Conference met in 1855 at Galveston, Bishop Pierce in charge, and Homer S. Thrall secretary. A class of thirteen, the largest on record thus far, was admitted on trial. The members of the class were as follows: Isaac P. Jeffries, John Carpenter, Henry Bowers, Robert W. Pierce, Robert J. Gill, James A. J. Smith, Benjamin A. Kemp, Hiram M. Burrows, Geo. W. Burrows, Wesley Smith, Frederick Imhoff, Hiram M. Glass, Joshua R. Wittemberg. Readmitted: Charles W. Thomas, John C. Kolbe, Joseph P. Sneed, Job M. Baker, James W. Shipman, Robert G. Rawley, William G. Foote. Only one location: Robert H. Belvin. Henry W. South was received by transfer from the Louisville Conference, James Rice from the Washita Conference, and Edward F. Thwing from the East Texas Conference.

The East Texas Conference for 1856 met at Paris, Bishop Paine presiding, James T. P. Irvine secretary. Jonathan C. Smith, Matthew H. Neely and William J. Joyce were admitted on trial. John S. Mathis was received by transfer from the Arkansas Conference.

One preacher had fallen during the year—Henry Fulgingin. He was born in North Carolina, November 18, 1788. Removed to Georgia at age of seven with family, settled in Cherokee nation. He received a limited education. Served in the Creek war in 1812. Married in 1816. Converted in 1817, and joined the M. E. Church. Served as class-leader for several years, then as an exhorter. Removed to Benton County, Alabama, where he was licensed to preach. Came to Texas in 1850, and settled in Lamar County. Admitted into East Texas Conference

in 1852, and appointed to Boston circuit. He served the Upshur mission the following year, and in 1854 was placed on the superannuated list. He died during the year 1856.

The Texas Conference met at Gonzales in 1856, December 3-9, Bishop Paine in charge, Homer S. Thrall secretary.

The record is again broken in admissions and readmissions. Robert P. Thompson, Walter S. South, Orceuth A. Fisher, Thomas P. Ferguson, John Budd, Horatio V. Philpott, William F. Compton, Jackson L. Crabb, William Rees, Jas. M. Stringfield, Buckner Harris, Ulrich Steiner, Joseph B. Perrie, and Thomas H. Ball were admitted on trial. Readmitted in elder's orders: Leonard S. Friend, Alexander F. Cox, Franklin C. Wilkes, Pleasant M. Tackett, Valentine H. Iley, and Asbury Davidson. J. L. Terry received by transfer from Georgia Conference, Preston W. Hobbs from the East Texas Conference.

The 1857 session of the East Texas Conference was held at Rusk, November 18, Bishop Kavanaugh president, C. C. Gillespie, secretary.

The record for this conference was broken in admissions. The following composed the class: John Adams, John H. Low, Rufus B. Womack, Elisha Blanton, George W. Harwell, Edward P. Rogers, Jacob M. Binkley, John T. Kennedy, Everett L. Armstrong, Joshua Y. Youngblood, Harin W. Moore, Wm. N. Bonner, Bennett Elkins (deacon), Lorenzo V. Brown, Joshua H. Wooten, James L. Terry—16.

We have for the first time to record an answer to the Minute Question 9—Who are expelled? Answer, Samuel Robinson.

John A. West comes by transfer from the West Virginia Conference.

Alfred Leroy Kavanaugh had died during the year. He was born in Davidson County, Tenn., June 12, 1819.

Removed to Randolph County, Ark., 1829. In 1840 or 1841 converted and joined the M. E. Church. Licensed to preach May 12, 1842. Immediately employed by P. E. on Little Red River mission. Admitted Arkansas Conference 1842. At close of first year discontinued at own request. In 1844 came to Texas and engaged in teaching and surveying. In 1845 married Miss Martha Frazer, of Tyler County. In 1851 admitted into East Texas Conference. He served Livingstone one year, Woodville one year, Crockett two years, and Anderson one year. His name disappears from the minutes of 1856. He died May 31, 1857, of pneumonia. He was described as a man of feeble constitution, yet of much energy, and of a sanguine temperament. He was possessed of a good mind and fine social qualities.

The Texas Conference met in 1857 at Waco, December 9, Bishop Kavanaugh, president, James W. Shipman, secretary.

Another record breaking class for admission, composed of the following: Wm. R. Fayle (deacon), Jasper K. Harper, Quinn M. Menefee, Charles J. Lane, David G. Bowers, Joel T. Daves, Adley E. Killough, James A. J. Smith, Wm. McK. Lambden (deacon), Oliver B. Adams, Richard W. Thompson, James C. Wilson, John L. Harper, John T. Gillett, Albert G. May, John Carmer, William G. Veal, John A. Shaper, George D. Parker, Marcus L. Tunnell—20. Readmitted: Wm. G. Nelms, J. W. B. Allen, J. M. Jones, Drura Womack, Geo. S. Gatewood, W. L. Kidd.

Question 10—Who have withdrawn? Henry P. Young, our old friend the original missionary to the Germans in Texas.

Robert T. P. Allen received by transfer from the Kentucky Conference.

In the East Texas Conference appointments for 1855 we have a Dallas district for the first time, John B. Tullis, presiding elder. We have already given an ac-



count of the first Methodist families and first preaching and organization in Dallas County. Methodist preaching in the town of Dallas is reported in 1853. "One of the first accounts of service in Dallas, then a village of 100 or 200 people," says Dr. J. H. McLean, in his "Reminiscences" was in the summer of 1853, when, as related by Uncle Buck Hughes, the Rev. James A. Smith, a local preacher of the Cochran neighborhood, preached in a small room 14 by 14 feet, on the southwest corner of the courthouse square, to an audience not exceeding one dozen. He mentions the following names as constituting the Methodists of town at that time: J. A. Crutchfield and family, Mrs. Sarah Cockrell, Mrs. Browder, Ed Browder, Dr. Rice, Marlin Thompson, Andrew Moore, and their families, and adds that we had no church house in Dallas until 1868, and that preaching was held in the lower room of the Masonic Hall, and in the courthouse." Dallas appears in the minutes almost continuously from 1846, and it has been shown that a class existed in Dallas in 1850, and it is a bit singular that we hear of no Methodist preaching there until 1853. The spot was first settled in 1841, and a village had sprung up here by 1846, when the county was organized. Dallas became the county seat in 1850. The town was incorporated in 1855.

A Gainesville appointment appears in 1855, revealing the westward trend of things; but Gainesville was dropped after one year, and this extreme territory of the conference was embraced in a "Border Mission." An old Gainesville class-book of 1855 contains thirty names, one colored; and on the mission there are three or four preaching places listed, without any lists of classes.

We have noticed the introduction of Methodism into Denton County in an earlier day by preachers from the Texas Conference. Preachers on Red Oak mission, in Ellis County, continued to visit Denton County, and in 1852 John W. Chalk, the preacher on that mission, or-

ganized a church at Alton, the first settled county seat. In 1853 an Alton mission was created, and in 1854 this charge was transferred to the East Texas Conference. The Alton church was disbanded in 1857, when the county seat was moved to Denton, and a church was organized at the latter place. A pioneer preacher of Denton County and the country west was Wm. E. Bates, who moved from Kentucky and settled in Denton County in 1851. He was admitted into the East Texas Conference in 1854, and placed on the Alton mission, and in 1855 he was on the Gainesville mission. We are told<sup>1</sup> that he organized the churches at Denton, Gainesville, Montague, Jacksboro, and other frontier points. "On his last circuit," says this account, "he rode from Denton up Clear Creek to Chisum's ranch, thence to Decatur and Big Sandy; thence to Montague, thence to Jacksboro and Weatherford and back through Tarrant County via Birdsville, to Lewisville, and then home to the eastern part of Denton county." On this round he had thirty-one appointments.

In 1857 a Tarrant mission is named in the minutes, East Texas Conference, but it does not include the village or post of Fort Worth, as that point was now included in the Texas Conference appointments. The Cedar Mountain and Fort Worth missions appear in the appointments of 1854, with Lewis J. Wright in charge of the Cedar Mountain work, and Fort Worth was "to be supplied." During the same year F. P. Ray was on the Lexington mission. Lexington was in Hill County, first organized in 1853, and was for awhile the county seat and the most important settlement in the county. In September, 1853, the new town of Hillsboro was laid out, and the county seat located there, although, as the minutes show, the circuit covering Hill County bore the name of Lexington the following year. But in 1855 Lexington is dropped and Hillsboro circuit appears, "to be supplied." Fort Worth does not appear by name in the appoint-

<sup>1</sup> Bates, *History of Denton County*, p. 44.

ments of 1855, but in 1856 the Fort Worth district was created, James G. Johnson, P. E., and F. P. Ray was on Fort Worth mission. The same year appears a "Brazos Station Indian Mission," to be supplied. We have noted the gathering of certain Indian tribes in a reservation on the upper Brazos. Major R. S. Neighbors was in charge of this reservation. Major Neighbors was a Methodist, and encouraged by him some efforts were made to establish a mission among the Indians. Rev. Pleasant M. Tackett, who was on Clear Creek mission in 1856, and on Fort Belknap mission in 1857, preached a few times to the Indians. But we are told that trouble arose between the whites on the frontier settlements and the Indians, and that "a company of about one thousand men collected and drove the Indians out of Texas," and that Major Neighbors was killed. Following this the Indian remnants remaining in Texas became troublesome, and "within a year after they were driven out at least one hundred persons fell victims to savage barbarity." The frontier preacher, Tackett himself, and one of his sons were on one occasion badly wounded by the Indians.

In none of the cities of the state is the history of Methodist beginnings so scant as in the case of Fort Worth. Aside from the references made in the preceding paragraph, gathered from the minutes, we have been able to find nothing except the following somewhat indefinite items:<sup>2</sup>

Rev. John W. Chalk, the father-in-law of Dr. J. W. Hill (Gulliver), of the North Texas Conference, claims to have been the first Methodist preacher to preach a sermon in Fort Worth. He was here probably as early as 1855. Rev. Walter South, father-in-law of Bishop Ward, also preached here about that time and says that he knew Fort Worth as a part of the Grapevine mission.

<sup>2</sup> Brief History of Fort Worth Methodism, pamphlet, W. Erskine Williams.

The Walter South mentioned was admitted into the Texas Conference in December, 1856, and appointed to Corsicana; in the fall of 1857 he was appointed to Fort Worth mission, which is probably as early as he preached there. Chalk was on the Alton mission, then included in the Texas Conference, in 1854. In December, 1854, Chalk transferred to the East Texas Conference and was appointed to Bonham; in 1855 he was appointed to Red River mission. So that it was in 1854 that his work lay next to Fort Worth, and it was probably during that year that he preached there. A circumstance which makes it more probable is, that we find him in 1854 assisting in a meeting at Elm Grove, eight miles east of Weatherford, in Parker County.<sup>3</sup> "At about the same time," we are told, "Rev. P. Tackett established a church in a grove on Walnut Creek (Parker County)," later called Goshen. The church at Weatherford, according to the same account, was organized by Tackett in April, 1857, with eleven members.

We have seen the statement that a class was organized in Waco in 1850, consisting of fifteen members, but beyond that bare fact nothing appears. Waco appears in the minutes in 1851, Pleasant M. Yell preacher. At the end of that year 54 white and 3 colored members are reported. In 1852 Geo. W. Tittle was appointed to the work, and in 1853 James H. Addison. At the end of that year the reports show 249 white members and five colored. The Waco district was created in 1855, Josiah W. Whipple presiding elder. By 1857 the place had attained sufficient importance to entertain the Texas Annual Conference. Waco Female College was chartered in 1854, but it did not open its doors until September, 1857, in charge of F. C. Wilkes, local pastor. Wm. McK. Lambden was then elected president, and the institution moved to the front rapidly. In October, 1857, F. C. Wilkes,

<sup>3</sup> Historical Sketch of Parker County, H. Smythe.

pastor at Waco, reports in the *Advocate* the progress of a great revival meeting. It had been running for two weeks in the Baptist church, protracted from a Baptist association, and then moved to the Methodist church, where it was still in progress. Sixty-one members had been added to the Methodist church, and forty-two to the Baptist church.

From the voluminous and somewhat racy correspondence of James H. Addison—and concerning the latter feature be it remembered that his letters were not written for the public eye, but for the perusal of his brothers only, and one of these a much younger brother who might be expected to appreciate the strain in which the missives were written—from these letters we may gather many interesting items relating to Waco and vicinity, including Marlin, during the years 1854-55. Without indicating exactly their date or circumstances the following extracts are from letters written in 1854:

I suppose you would like to have an account of my trip up to this country, well I will gratify you in part by detailing a little of my ups and downs since we parted. On Thursday morning I jog'd on my way towards Bastrop. I went on till the Norther struck me, when I began to repent of starting, but by dint of perseverance I reached Bastrop late at night, and almost froze stoped at the house of Doct Rector, where I remained till Saturday. . . . On Wednesday, though a stiff Norther was blowing, I took up the line of march for Webberville Reached there that night, and remained till friday went to Austin on friday, and on Saturday I reached Round Rock on Brushey. . . . On Sunday afternoon I rode to bro Windsor's. Here my horse hurt his back with a fence rail, and I remained till Thursday morning. Got to Belton on friday morning and here a severe norther met me. . . . Here I remained till Monday when I rode fifteen miles on the road to Waco and stoped at the house of Bob Childres alias Tonchucha Bob, who is increasing in this worlds goods amazingly Next day, after a diligent ride reached Brother John M Stephens the first



point on the Circuit that I was able to reach. I knocked about til Sunday (yesterday) and had the pleasure of holding forth to quite a fine audience of Brazos, Bosque and surrounding country, in a little bit of a stick and dirt school house about ten miles above the capitol of McLennan Co. to wit Waco. . . . I am at present at the house of Brother Gurley, in the town of Waco, where I shall remain a day or two, then I have to go out in the country and marry a couple on thursday night, then Back to the City and fire upon them on Sabbath as hard as I can.

You want to know if there is any religion up here. If you had been with me a few weeks ago, at the town of Marlin, and seen the way the folks joined the church, you might have concluded there was a little religion up here.

We are in the midst of the highest state of excitement perhaps you ever saw. I know that I never saw greater stirs among the "Sovereigns" than now. I will give you a short account of the origin and extent of the difficulty If you get no other news but this you must be content, as this at the present seems to swallow up every other consideration. Last year there was a company of men stationed at Fort Graham (which is in the bounds of this work) under the command of Major Arnold. During the time they were there, the surgeon of the army, Doct Steiner, and Leiutenant Bingham got into a quarrel, and carried the matter so high that Arnold had them both arrested, and confined to their quarters. The next morning Doct Steiner left his quarters and marched up to Arnold's quarters, armed Arnold asked him if he wasn't under arrest, he answered Yes: and asked why he was arrested? Arnold ordered him back to his quarters, when the Doctor refused to go. Arnold then shot at him and missed him when Steiner shot five balls into him, killing him immediately. The military then arrested Steiner to try him by a Court Martial, but by a writ of habeas Corpus, he was arrested from the military to be tried by the Civil law. The District Court came on, but the case was put off, and it was very evident that the object of the Lawyers of Steiner was to put it off from court to court till the military were worn out, then bring it on in the District Court and clear him of the charge. Things continued in this condition till a Court Martial was ordered at Austin to try Steiner, and a Leiutenant and company of men were dispatched to arrest Steiner who was

living at Fort Graham, nominally under arrest, but in reality as free as I am. It will be proper also to state that the troops had all left Fort Graham and the place was filled up with citizens. When the Lieutenant came to Graham, the Sheriff refused to give up Steiner, and the Officer returned without him. Subsequently General Harney [or Harvey] sent him back with orders to arrest the Doctor and bring him back to Austin, unless he was under corporeal arrest at Graham. The officer got there in the night, and early in the morning arrested the Doctor. He was at home in his own house, without a guard or under any restraint at all. The Doctor submitted with such good grace that the Officer—Lieutenant Anderson—who had him in custody was thrown off his guard, and the Doctor easily persuaded him to go with him by the way of Waco. Now commenced the grand excitement the plea for which was, that it was time to put a stop to the encroachments of the Military, and that as Steiner was under Civil arrest for murder, the Military had no right to claim him out of the hands of the civil authorities to try him for mutiny and insubordination, which is true enough, but the true reason was that Steiner was a fellow of like kidney with themselves, and they determined to clear him, right or wrong. While the officer was proceeding deliberately to Waco with the prisoner, the Ft Graham folks were riding all over the country, trying to muster men to arrest the officer. The company from Graham got into Waco, and had everything prepared for the reception of Anderson when he should come. Accordingly when he made his appearance, about eight o'clock the next morning, they managed it so that they induced the Officer to cross the River with Steiner, and but three of his men, the balance of the sixteen dragons were left on the other side. So soon as the Officer got over they got him into a house, and the sheriff served a civil process upon him and attempted to arrest him. He immediately drew his revolver and declared he would submit to no civil arrest, at the same time calling his three guards around him. The passion of the bloodthirsty rabble could no longer be restrained, but from both doors protruded guns enough to have shot the Lieutenant into a thousand pieces, and even when the Officer understood the nature of the writ and had submitted it was with the greatest difficulty that some of the rabble could be restrained from taking the life of Anderson. Altogether it

was one of the most shameful scenes that has ever occurred in all this country, and will bring some of the perpetrators of it I hope with deserved ignominy. After the shameful proceedings narrated above, they released a murderer and retained Anderson, intending to try him for obeying the orders of his superior, or in other words for abducting a prisoner from the hands of the civil authority. No man can remain neutral here. he must either be a Steiner man or against him, and those who are against him are fearfully in the minority.<sup>4</sup>

You complain about the hardness of your folks at Brownsville, but really I am inclined to think that our little town of Waco can equal if not surpass it. Here wickedness forms the rule and refraining from it the exception. Gambling is practised by nearly all, not only the doggery set but the "high-minded and honorable"—the "top-of-the-pot" those who walk about the streets with puritanical faces, attend church on Sunday and then set up all night Sunday night betting on Cards or Pharo Bank. Indeed it is hard to distinguish the moral from the immoral. Men that you would suppose would be above such vices can be found night after night in the little "Halls" around, staking their all upon the turn of a card.

I think by cutting my cards right I will have a revival here. . . . We have had some fine revivals with us and about seventy or eighty have united with the church since I have been here. We had a very fine camp meeting near Waco. We had quite a number of tents, and but few preachers. The meeting continued a week. There were forty two joined the church. . . . Methodism received a fresh impetus, and I think it is well established that nothing can move it now. The combined powers of the Baptists and the Devil will be unavailing towards shaking the fabric thus reared.

[1855] There has been such an influx of immigration to this place the past six months, and there has been such great demand for house room that every little shanty has been crowded to their utmost extension. The case is being altered now, however, as the good folks are building rapidly all over town, and I do not think I would miss it, were I to say that fifty houses

<sup>4</sup> The fact that this was a celebrated case in its day, stirring up the country round about, is our excuse for inserting this account of it here in the midst of church affairs.

have been put up this year in Waco. . . . We had a two-days meeting at Gatesville the county seat of Coryeel county, at which there were about 8 professed religion and fourteen joined the church. . . . Our 2d Q M has just closed, and as you are disposed to grumble at your receipts I will have to inform you of mine to keep you in countenance. Stewards report, almost nothing. P E put up a pitiful mouth about money. gave it all to him by my consent. Publick collection \$12.30. I kept eight quarters and three dimes, gave the rest to Yell. Claim of your humble servant \$150.00 receipt \$5.30. This is the total amount that your worthy brother has received for the present year.

The Waco charge, as we see, embraces Marlin and Gatesville, and all the Bosque country between, including also Fort Graham. In 1856-57 Benjamin A. Kemp was on the Gatesville mission, and he organized the work in Coryell, Bosque and Erath counties. In 1857-58 he organized the Fort Graham mission, in Hill and adjoining counties. The work in Bosque County took the name of Meridian in 1856, John R. White preacher. In 1857-58 Weatherford mission appears as the frontier work on the northwestern border of the Texas Conference, with J. M. Jones and W. G. Veal in charge. In 1856 Wesley Smith—who was a brother of the James A. Smith who pioneered in Dallas County—organized the San Saba mission, on the western side of the Colorado above Austin. Hamilton mission—the place was later called Burnet—makes its appearance in 1854, in the Austin district, John W. Cope in charge.

A few scattering notes from along this firing line one may glean from the *Advocate* of that day. A note from B. A. Kemp in October, 1857, states that he had just closed a camp-meeting at Fort Gates, and that 29 had joined the church, making 71 since conference. J. L. Crabb reports from Hillsboro a camp-meeting at Rock Spring, near the village of Peoria, with thirty conversions and as many accessions. A note from Robert Alexander, Bible Agent, from Veal's Station, Parker County,



is of interest, as it describes the progress of the mails in those days. Says he: "I have been pleased to see with what promptness the readers of the *Advocate* get their papers. At Waxahachie I read the *Advocate* five days after date; at Fort Worth ten days after date, in Parker County it came to hand after fourteen days." The *Advocate* it will be remembered, was published in Galveston. Alexander adds: "Fort Worth is now a nice village and improving in a very substantial way."

All along this western frontier the local preacher contributed a large part in establishing the Church, and in many sections he was the pioneer and the first preacher in a settlement. A few examples of these outpost guards, many of whom never got their names in the conference minutes or in the papers, may here be cited. In 1856 Rev. Francis Marion Caldwell moved from Washington County, Ark., and settled in Parker County, Texas, near Springtown. For the next ten years, so long as he lived in that country, he preached regularly in Parker, Wise, Tarrant and other northwestern counties. He also taught school in Parker and Wise counties. In 1858 he supplied the Keechi mission. A camp ground was established at Springtown, and one also at Goshen.<sup>5</sup>

"My father (Rev. M. O. Coker) came overland from Tunnell Hill, Ga., to Texas in 1854," writes Rev. J. W. Coker, of Oklahoma. "He located in Bell county and made one crop. In the spring of '55 he was licensed to preach by Dr. Homer S. Thrall. In the fall of '55 my father moved to Comanche county, and there spent the remainder of his life. His family was the eighth family to settle in the county. He preached the first Methodist sermon in the county, and assisted in organizing the first two Methodist churches in the county. Some time in the late spring of 1856 our Church sent a missionary to preach to us in the person of Rev. Benjamin Kemp. He

<sup>5</sup> Information furnished by a son, Rev. James P. Caldwell, a superannuate member of the Southwest Missouri Conference.



left his family at Gatesville, Coryell county, that being considered then the outpost of civilization. . . . Rev. Elisha Childers preached the first Methodist sermon ever preached in Brown, Coleman and Runnels counties."

Rev. Sam C. Vaughan, a superannuate member of the Northwest Texas Conference, in recalling early days in Burnet County, writes as follows: "My father came from Osage county, Missouri, and settled in Burnet county, Texas, in 1852. It was a thinly settled and Indian-infested country, full of unmolested nature. . . . In 1856 Rev. C. C. Arnett moved to Burnet County, and settled six miles north of us. Two years later Rev. Sam W. Moreland came from Tennessee and settled one mile west of Arnett. He was born and licensed to preach in Tennessee, and travelled as pastor for some years. He was a matter-of-fact, sober-minded, Christian gentleman. He and Brother Arnett were of great use as local Methodist preachers. Bro. Moreland had some negroes, one old man so large he had to have shoes made for him, his feet too big for bought shoes. Ed Whitlock, a negro preacher, was holding a meeting there. He said, 'Let us pray; Brudder Sam, lead us in prayer.' Sam replied, 'Skuse me, Bruder Ed; I'm not a good hand at it.' " In the same narrative we have the following:

The Comanche Indians were giving us much trouble by stealing our horses and killing our people. They would come down the Colorado Mountains in day time and then come out through the settlement at night and get a bunch of horses and lead to the Brakes by daylight. The Methodists were holding a big camp meeting on Bear Creek, and the Campbellites a camp meeting on the Gabriel, three miles apart. A runner came to report the Indians coming, but the Indians beat the messenger to the Campbellite camp and got a big lot of fine horses. But the messenger beat them to the Methodist camp and the campers jumped up and struck lights and rounded in their horses. The Indians had got within a half mile of camp, but when they saw the lights they turned abruptly west and went right through

Arnett's and Moreland's horse range. The trailers that were after the Indians came back and said to Brother Moreland: "They got all your horses." Bro. Moreland was sitting in his tent. He put his elbows on his knees and his face in his hands and sat thus a moment, then rose up and said: "I can't believe they got my big bunch of horses." Some one said "Why?" He said, "When my wagons were loaded and all started to the camp ground, I went back in my house and on my knees I told God I was going down to worship and asked him to care of all my affairs; I believe he has done it." So he ordered a negro to saddle his horse and he rode away home and returned and said, "Not a horse gone."

D. N. Arnett, one of the best known ranchmen of West Texas, now living at Colorado City, and his wife, Ophelia Moreland, are children of these Burnet county preachers, Arnett and Moreland, and both uphold the best traditions of their families in their Christian character and in church life.

Wesley Smith says that he made a trip to San Saba valley in 1854 to look at the county, and that there was not a house in the valley.<sup>6</sup> He was admitted on trial into the Texas Conference in 1855, and appointed to San Saba mission, with nothing to go to. The Mission Board had appropriated \$500 for his support, and of this he expended \$125 for a horse and \$50 for a revolver. He made a round, visiting the Fowler settlement, in Burnet County, thence to Harrington's, and to Dancer's (a local preacher, to meet his death later by Indians), thence to Honey Creek, and into Llano county. After returning home he accompanied J. W. Whipple to a quarterly conference at Hamilton (Burnet) for the Hamilton mission, and at the same time and place a San Saba mission quarterly conference was held. Smith held camp-meetings this year at Burnham's Springs, Burnet County, and at Simpson's Creek. During the year he moved into San

<sup>6</sup> In a booklet giving account of his life.

Saba valley. He was returned to the same work the following year, and records that he preached higher up on the Colorado than any one had gone before.

On the southwestern frontier the missions of Cibolo, Medina and Blanco appear in 1855, and in 1856 Kerrville and "Uvalde and Live Oaks." For this latter charge the appointment stands, "one to be supplied, and James M. Stringfield." But we often learn that the minutes are not a safe guide as to what really occurred. This new charge was the western outpost of the conference, in the Victoria district, Oscar M. Addison, presiding elder. We learn from Addison's correspondence that early in the year the charges were separated, Thomas Myers being placed in charge of the Uvalde mission, Stringfield was released, and the Live Oak mission was supplied for the year jointly by O. A. Fisher, of Corpus Christi, and Wm. C. Rees, of Refugio mission. A report from Thomas Myers, under date of April 2, 1857, and published in the *Texas Christian Advocate*, gives an account of his first appointment and the organization of the first church in Uvalde:

Having passed over the fertile high table lands of the Sabinal and Rio Frio, I reached Uvalde in good time to fill my appointment at that place. This town is situated at the head of the Leona river.—This river rises in a beautiful valley country and has a bold, rapid current, which is sufficient to drive any machinery, even in low water, and at little expense, without the danger of overflow. On my arrival in town, I found the citizens engaged in fitting up a large upper room of a rock building, for an accommodation, in which to hold our meetings.—The services commenced at early candlelight, with a respectable congregation in attendance. Though much fatigued by a heavy drive, yet I felt refreshed and nerved for the occasion; there was an unusual seriousness pervading the congregation when I entered the room and commenced religious exercises; my own heart felt unusually solemn, knowing that we were about to plant the Christian standard, and unfurl the banner of the Cross

within fifty miles of the banks of the Rio Grande, and sixty miles farther out than the gospel had ever gone before in our regular itinerant work. "I felt how important it is for us to begin the work right, according to our cherished institutions, around which cluster the hopes of the church in time to come." We had a solemn weeping—blessed time. In closing our meeting on Sunday night, I found the Lord had given me some seals to my ministry. We organized a small society of seven members, and, under God, we expect to add many more before the close of the present Conference year.

The "rim" of the occupied territory was thus expanded during this period to embrace Gainesville, Fort Worth, Weatherford, the San Saba country, Kerrville and Uvalde, giving a tremendously wide sweep to the frontiers of the Church in Texas. But this, it will be seen, occupies but about one half of the state, leaving the settlement and conquest of the other half to be witnessed by the next fifty years or more.

Referring to certain conditions affecting the ministry during this period, we refer to Thrall, who was one of those who passed through all these scenes. "As yet," he says, "very inadequate provision had been made for the support of itinerant ministers. A few inferior buildings had been secured for parsonages, but the great mass of married preachers had to provide homes for their families. The pay was inadequate to the necessities of pastors who had families to provide for and children to educate. Stern necessity drove many men, men of large experience and eminent qualifications for the work, to location." Continuing, he says:

Preachers were scarce, and some were received on trial who had but inferior qualifications for the great work they undertook. At that time the course of study was limited, and in many instances examinations were superficial, and many were received who soon gave up the itinerant work. It seems incredible, but the Minutes show that during these ten years (1846—

1855) thirty-two were located in the East Texas Conference, and twenty-nine in the Texas Conference; and not a few who were admitted on trial were discontinued before being received into membership. But not a few of these locations were temporary, and after a short period, in which their families were provided for, we find the same preachers again in the itinerant ranks. The want of parsonages, with the difficulty experienced in getting suitable houses in which to live, was one great reason for these locations. . . . Rev. Dr. Alexander, who labored so long in the itinerant work, had homes at different times in Rutersville, Cottage Hill, Austin County, Galveston, Bell County, Harris County, and Chappell Hill, where he finally died. The present writer, during the fifty years that he has been in the active itinerant work, has lived in parsonages twelve years, in the following places: Galveston, Lavacca, Brenham, Chappell Hill, Corpus Christi, San Marcos and Seguin . . . but has lived in rented houses, or houses which he was compelled to buy or build, while presiding elder on the Galveston, Rutersville, Austin, Victoria, Columbus, and San Antonio Districts, and on some circuits. At this present writing (1887) there is but one district parsonage in the West Texas Conference, and only a few in Texas.

Apropos of these observations, an extract from a letter from R. Alexander during his residence—more properly an “encampment”—in Bell County during 1857 is given. From all reports that was a year of great drouth and financial stress. The letter was dated “Howard, August 29th, 1857,” and was addressed to O. M. Addison, presiding elder on the Victoria district:

It has been my intention to give up the agency [for American Bible Society] this winter, but I am in a very unsettled condition and it is more than probable that I will continue in it until I get to some place that is more like home than my present camp arrangement. I did think I would settle in this county but I can only take it on trial for the present for if we do not starve for bread it appears that we might perish for water. We are in a poor fix up here health we enjoy but bread



and water are necessary for its continuance. . . . You astonish me by intimating that you are ready to leave the high position assigned you as P. E. upon so short an experience. And yet again that your finances should be so low as to straiten you. What cannot one large district support one Bachellor Presiding Elder of your dimentions how is this What will the brethren do who have wives & children I fear our preachers who have wives and children will starve out during this awful calamitous drouth.

And where and when did the proverb originate that "times of drouth are times of revival?" It is sufficient to say that it did not originate in 1857. Says Alexander in this letter: "Religion seems to be at a quiet if not at a low ebb pretty much all over our land. We are dull enough in these parts hope for better times for Bread water and religion." And the minutes of the conferences for 1857 show a decrease in "probationers" received—the class drawn largely from new converts.

A sketch of church affairs in Houston for 1856 may be given to illustrate how matters were going in a "city church" in that day. The pastor was Charles H. Brooks. The writer is Mrs. Blandin, before quoted as the historian of Shearn Church. "The stewards," we are informed, "were Charles Shearn, Jas. F. Dumble, Alex. McGowen, Vanbibber and Dr. Bryan. Jas. F. Dumble was superintendent of the Sunday school and Charles Shearn was class leader. The singing was congregational, not even a melodeon had been introduced at that time, and Mr. Brooks says it was good." Continuing, she says:

The system of renting pews had been adopted during Mr. Summers's pastorate, at his suggestion, and was still the plan for raising church revenue. These pews were of the old English style, with doors fastened by locks; all expenses were paid by the rent. When Mr. Brooks took charge of the church he found the roll of members had either been lost or destroyed; he made a new one; reorganized the church and found he had seventy less

members than had been reported at the last conference. In the early spring he held a protracted meeting for four weeks and the church was crowded day and night with eager workers and penitents. More than 100 professed conversion. One incident will serve to show the interest taken in the day services of the meeting. One day there was quite a commotion in the back part of the church, but the altar and the aisles were so crowded that the pastor could not reach the place. After the congregation was dismissed he found a German who had been so powerfully convicted that he could neither walk nor stand for some time. All services were well attended, the Sunday School was in the first rank of Sunday Schools for that day, the class meetings and love-feasts were times of refreshing from the Lord.

An inkling of the kind of "sowing" that was done prior to the revival mentioned above is found in a letter from Brooks, written March 10, 1856. Says he: "My prospects for doing good in Houston are increasing. I preached to a large congregation on sabbath, on the depravity of the human heart, which I illustrated 1st from the bible 2dly from the City of Houston. Sabath night the house was crowded. I preached an hour & a half from Hbrs 11th & 7th. I am laboring night and day for a revival of religion. without it Houston is gon. pray for us."

Some of the bishops who visited Texas gave to the church press full accounts of their journeyings and observations. The correspondence of Bishop Pierce is preserved in a book entitled, "Incidents of Western Travel," and from this we take certain incidents occurring on his first Texas tour in 1855: "After inquiring the way to Marshall," he records, his point of departure being Shreveport, "we drove through and as we had been told to follow the telegraphic wires, we found no difficulty in sticking to the right track. The posts and wires seemed like old acquaintances, after our long sojourn among the prairies and woods; and they indicated, too, that we had returned to the highways of a progressive people. But this is a new country; and although the citizens have

availed themselves of the electric news-carrier, yonder comes a relic of the past—a primitive medium of transportation—a cotton wagon drawn by oxen. For forty miles we were rarely out of sight of these clumsy vehicles and their slow-moving teams. But their days are numbered: one more season of toil, and the patient ox will rarely travel beyond his owner's broad acres, and the cumbrous wagon will stand still in its shed. There upon the right is an embankment, and just ahead an excavation. These foot-prints of the engineers are the forerunner of an iron track, the iron horse—his speed and his burden. When once the steam whistle wakes the echoes of these woods and vales, and the country commands all the facilities of a well-managed railroad, emigration from the East will receive a new impetus, and capital and intelligence will work new wonders in the West."

The East Texas Conference over, of which the Bishop gives only brief mention, but in the highest terms, he sets out on a leisurely journey for Galveston, with many preaching appointments on the way. Following his narrative we find:

Brother Gillespie was our travelling companion, and on the way we picked up Brother Angell. . . . We reached Rusk, the county seat of Cherokee, in a storm of wind, rain and hail. The Methodists, contrary to their usual custom of building on the outskirts, had located their church in the center of the town. Despite the wind and weather, the house was lighted; the people assembled, and I tried to preach. Here Brother Hobbes met us with horse and buggy to take us to another stage of our journey. A two days' meeting had been given out at Shiloh, about twenty miles distant, and on Saturday morning (the next day) we set out—quite a troop—Gillespie, Angell, Hobbes, Shanks, and Lovick and I. We left the highway, and if I were to say, took the woods, it would be no exaggeration. We reached the place a little behind time, but the people were waiting, and I preached once more, and made an appointment for Brother Gillespie at night. Next day, Sunday, I preached again, and for variety's sake

must say a little about the singing. After prayer I gave out a short metre hymn. A brother who had been leading the singing raised a common-metre tune. Thinking to relieve him, I announced the metre again. He tried the second time, and failed. Seeing that he was embarrassed, I remarked, "We will omit singing," and commenced giving out my text. When I had stated book, chapter and verse, another brother, apparently resolved upon a song, tried his voice upon a tune. He missed badly. Supposing that he had not heard me, I said a little louder, "We will omit singing," and again was telling where my text might be found, when, to everybody's amusement, and nearly to the overthrow of my gravity, a *third* man lifted his voice, and the sound "sprangled" among notes generally, without specifying any. The privilege of laughing would have been a relief, but that would have been a rare preface to a sermon, and so, holding my muscles to the right place by a stern will, I proceeded with the text and the discourse. It was a good time. . . . During the next day . . . we reached Sumter, a little straggling, piney woods town, before night, and stopped to preach. We had to use the Campbellite Church, the only one in the place. . . . Service over, we dispersed; all for awhile going the same direction. The night was very dark, and conversation was free. One fellow, who seemed to have his preconceived notions wonderfully upset, spoke out as though he were soliloquizing: "Well, that is a Bishop: I have often heard of 'em, but never seed one before. Why, he is nothing but a man, after all. He talks like other people; in fact he preaches like Mr. Z——" Brother Angell told me that Mr. Z—— was considered a tolerable exhorter, but about the poorest preacher in Texas. . . . Brother Gillespie, on going from Galveston to Marshall had a series of appointments, where he preached and presented the claims of the Texas Advocate. On his return with me, he concluded every service with a brief speech, and opened his books for patronage. Going and coming he obtained four hundred subscribers. This plan is wise; the policy is good in more respects than one. I recommend it to all the brethren. Two or three months every year spent in visiting the people, would largely promote our publishing interests. Let the editors come into personal contact with the people; represent the interest they manage; diffuse their ministry a little; show the Church

that they can preach, and do preach as well as they write; and by labor, sympathy, and service, identify themselves and their paper more directly with the masses, and the effect will be a quadrupled circulation. Neither the preachers nor the people ever see these editorial knights of the quill until they come down to Conference to settle up. Show yourselves, brethren.

We have but a brief report in Bishop Kavanaugh's "Life" of his visit to Texas in 1857, and this confined to an account of his sermon at the East Texas Conference at Rusk. The occasion was Thanksgiving Day. The text was from Psalms 65:9-11. J. M. Binkley, who was attending his first conference and who had seen his first bishop, writes: "This was the most powerful and overwhelming sermon I ever heard. He carried all with him; nor have I ever on any other occasion witnessed such an effect as was at that time produced. The audience were completely overcome by a power that was more than human. Some laughed, others shouted or wept, while many rose to their feet, and some fell as dead men fall in battle. I was watching my presiding elder, who was a strong man every way. For some time he was calm, and seemed resolved not to yield to the tide that was sweeping over the assembly; but unable to hold out longer he, too, yielded, and praised God aloud. Twenty-seven years have come and gone since then, but never have I heard that sermon surpassed for its grand thoughts, its unction, and its power."

It is now time we were turning attention to our educational work during this period—to the rise of new institutions and the progress of the old ones. It is during this period also that we bid a sad farewell to Rutgersville College, whose decline had set in some years before, as we have noticed.

In 1856 a memorial was presented to the State Legislature by the trustees of Rutgersville College, headed by Capt. W. J. Russell, requesting that the right conferred



upon the Texas Conference of appointing trustees for the institution be withdrawn, and at the same time application was made for the consolidation of Rutgersville College with a certain military school in Galveston. The action of the trustees excited much unfavorable comment among the preachers, and some steps were taken to forestall the action requested. Rev. J. M. Wesson, of Washington, went to Austin, and in conference with J. W. Phillips, presiding elder of the Austin district, decided that nothing could be done. A letter from Wesson, dated Austin, July 15, 1856, explains the situation:

Bro. Phillips readily consented to unite with me in endeavoring to procure at best postponement of Legislative action. We could not appear as representatives of the Conference, but simply as members of that body. Senator Bryan kindly spoke to me before presenting the memorial, assuring me that he would not present it, if I had evidence that the Conference was opposed to it. When the matter was discussed before the Senatorial Educational Committee Col. Caldwell strongly urged objections to it. But the Committee unanimously resolved to report favorably upon the memorial. After the report was presented Mr. Bryan promised to procure its recommitment if Br. Phillips and I would draw up, in behalf of the Conference, a statement showing why the prayer of the Memorialists should not be granted. We sat down to do so, and gave the subject hours of thoughtful attention; but we could draw up no statement satisfactory to ourselves, and that we believed would influence the members of the Legislature. We had access to no documents, and were in possession of no information calculated to give force to our remonstrance. We therefore informed our friends that we should take no further action in the premises. Had we had solid ground to stand upon we would have contested it inch by inch, but as the matter stands resistance was useless. It is true we might have used our influence among our acquaintances in both houses, and by log rolling secured its defeat. Indeed Br. Webb said that he knew we could defeat it if we tried. But if we could not accomplish our purpose by fair and honorable means, we neither felt disposed to employ any other.

The fact is, so far as we can ascertain the Conference has had no vested right in the property of the institution. Br. Wilson gave it to me as his opinion that such is the case. The property is vested in the trustees, and they have the entire control of it. The amendment of the Charter simply confers upon the Conference the power to appoint trustees. That power can be taken away at any time by the body that conferred it; and though it may be discourteous, it is not illegal. . . . The truth is, the great curse of that institution, to my mind, has been the State grant of four leagues of land. This prevented it from becoming legally a denominational institution. If we attempt to claim it as a Methodist institution we are met by the charge of fraud against the State. I am disposed to think that perhaps after all it will be a benefit to the Church. We must see that the foundation is right at Chappel Hill, and then work in good earnest to build upon it.

The necessary legislative action was taken, and in October, 1856 the "Texas Monumental and Military Institute," under the superintendency of Col. Caleb G. Forshey, opened its first session in the halls of Rutgersville College.

We have noted the preliminary steps taken at the Texas Conference in 1854 toward the creation of Soule University, at Chappell Hill. That institution came into actual being in 1856. The first Board of Trustees, appointed at the Conference of 1855, was composed of the following: Thomas B. White, J. D. Giddings, J. H. Davidson, J. W. Whipple, Richard Crawford, James McLeod, Robert Alexander, H. Yoakum, Gabriel Felder, C. P. Barton, W. S. Day, H. S. Thrall, L. D. Bragg, William Chappell, J. C. Wilson, and W. C. Webb. The trustees held the first meeting at Chapell Hill on January 18, 1856, when T. B. White was chosen president of the Board, Rev. James M. Follansbee, A. M., M. D., was elected president of the University, and John N. Kirby, principal of the Preparatory Department. The Preparatory Department of the University was opened on Feb-

ruary 1, 1856, in one of the buildings of the former Chappell Hill College. A charter was secured from the Legislature, which was approved February 22, 1856. "This charter declared nowhere that Soule University was the property of the Methodist church, or that the Board of Trustees held the property in trust, for this church, but were a 'body corporate under the name and style of the Board of Trustees of Soule University, and by that name shall have succession for a term of ninety years.' However, the charter was very definite in its second section as to the control of the institution, for it says: 'Soule University shall be under the control and supervision of the Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Board of Trustees shall be re-elected from time to time under the direction of the said Texas Conference, and when elected shall have power to fill all vacancies that may occur therein, subject to ratification by the succeeding conference.'"<sup>5</sup> Another section of the charter required the Board of Trustees to make an annual written report to the conference, showing the exact condition of the institution and of the work done, and the conference was given authority to change the conduct of affairs, and to transmit to the Board of Trustees such instruction as the conference deemed necessary for the welfare of the institution.

Rev. R. W. Kennon had been appointed financial agent of Soule University. He went before the East Texas Conference at its session in 1856 and solicited the cooperation of that body in building the enterprise, and offered them the privilege of naming ten of the twenty-five trustees required by the charter. The conference acceded, and named the following trustees: Rev. John Powell, Rev. W. D. Ratcliffe, Rev. A. J. Shanks, Rev. R. Wyche, L. V. Greer, M.D., J. H. Griffin, Esq., J. J. Hall, A. S. Kyle, Alexander McClure, and Henry Ware. "It

<sup>5</sup> C. C. Cody, article "Soule University," Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly, January, 1911.

does not, however, appear that any change of the charter was ever made which gave the East Texas Conference, or the trustees appointed by them, any legal rights whatever in the premises."

"At the close of the first session," says Dr. Cody, "the commencement address was delivered by Col. H. Yoakum, and at this time, June 23, 1856, William Halsey, A. M., former president of Rutgersville College, was elected president of Soule University. He at once entered upon the duties of his office and the next year ninety-five students were enrolled, most of whom were in the preparatory grade. The following year Rev. W. G. Foote, A. M., was elected Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. The chair was then endowed by a gift of \$25,000 from Col. Jared Kirby and called the Kirby Professorship. The Chair of Languages was at the same time endowed by Hon. Gabriel Felder for the same amount and called the Felder Professorship. At the following commencement, June 30, 1858, the annual address was delivered by Rev. W. H. Seat. The number enrolled for this year was one hundred and fifteen."

The University building was erected on a tract of land containing ten acres, given to the trustees for the University site by Dr. R. J. Swearingen. The corner-stone of this building was laid November 2, 1858, on which occasion addresses were made by R. Felder and Rev. J. W. Kenney. The building was of stone, 56 feet front and 84 feet deep, three stories high, a very commodious and imposing structure for that day, having cost, when completed, not less than \$40,000.

Soule University did not allow co-education. No woman was connected with the institution, either as teacher or pupil. The old Chappell Hill Female College continued to function as a separate institution. Soule University had simply absorbed the Male Department of this original school. A written pledge, we are told, was demanded of all pupils in Soule University, promising



obedience, punctuality, and application to study, and closing with the following: "And I hereby certify that I have delivered to the President all my concealed weapons."

The trustees of Soule University in 1857 authorized the establishment of a Law Department, to be located in Houston, and a Medical Department, to be located in Galveston, and faculties were elected for these branches, but no serious efforts were made to organize these departments until after the Civil War.

McKenzie Institute, located near Clarksville, was seeing its palmiest days during the period now under review. The Institute now occupied four large three-story frame buildings, one as a dormitory for young ladies, two for boys, and one for chapel and recitation purposes. The two boarding halls for boys were called respectively the Duke and Graft houses, named in honor of the builders. The third floor of the recitation building was devoted to the two debating societies—the Philologian and the Dialectic. The student body published a college paper, called the "The School Monthly."

An advertisement of the school, appearing in 1856, names the following faculty: Rev. J. W. P. McKenzie, principal; Smith Ragsdale, B. F. Fuller, J. T. Kennedy, J. N. B. Henslee. Teachers in Female Department: Rev. J. W. P. McKenzie, Smith Ragsdale, Martha E. Ragsdale. Vocal and Instrumental Music, D. Danforth. The rates for a term of ten months, including "board, washing, room rent, and tuition in English Department, if paid at close of session," are given at \$110. "Those entering the Institute are required to furnish lights, stationery, and text-books." The "lights," provided by the Institute, but charged on the bill of the student, were tallow candles.

"In 1854 when the writer entered," says Dr. J. H. McLean in his "Reminiscences," referring to the McKenzie school, "there were nine professors and tutors, over three hundred pupils and, with very few exceptions, all



boarded in the institution. I can never forget my first night at the college, when, at a most inopportune hour—4 a. m.—the college bell pealed out on the stillness of the night, calling us to the chapel for morning prayer. This exercise consisted of a scripture lesson, lecture, song and prayer. It was then in the dead of winter, crisp and cold, and yet ‘Old Master’ was seen, candle in hand, wending his way to the chapel in his shirt sleeves and slippers, while the girls and boys were wrapped in shawls and blankets. His plea for this practice was that it was a health measure, a morning air bath. . . . Chapel service over, four successive tables were then served for breakfast by candle light. Similar chapel services were held at 8 a. m. and in the evening. On Sunday we had Sunday school led by the president, preaching at 11 a. m., class meeting at 3 p. m., and preaching or prayer meeting at night. There was also prayer meeting on Thursday nights. In addition to these stated religious exercises, the environment was kept free from all contaminating influences, so much so, that the writer during a stay of nearly six years never heard an oath nor saw a bottle of whisky or a deck of cards. As a result of all this spiritual painstaking and the annual revivals of religion, it was not unusual that during the session more than ninety per cent of the student body became professed Christians, and the records show that out of an aggregate of 3,300 pupils, 2,250 were converted while attending school.”

The same writer says that Dr. McKenzie received no financial aid from any source, but built up the institution and maintained it out of the income from his patronage. “It is also true that no boy or girl, however poor, was ever turned away from his school. The writer well remembers when the Rev. E. A. Bailey, who became one of the most honored and useful members of the Northwest Texas Conference, came afoot with a bundle of clothes

on his back from Greenwood, Louisiana, to McKenzie College, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, and was warmly greeted, notwithstanding his impecunious condition, and for several years shared freely the benefits of the institution. Another such student was John Burke, who 'footed it' from Jefferson to McKenzie College, a distance of 100 miles, and later became a brilliant lawyer, partner and brother-in-law of Gov. Murrah, of Marshall."

The contribution of McKenzie Institute to the ministry, the bar, the teaching profession, and to almost every field of usefulness in Texas is beyond estimation. Many of the earlier graduates of this school rose to distinction and fell in the Civil War. Among those students who afterwards became well known in the Methodist ministry in Texas may be mentioned the following: Andrew Davis, whose romantic early career and entrance at McKenzie we have recounted; E. A. Bailey, John H. McLean, J. Fred Cox (whose wife was also a McKenzie student), Milton H. Porter (who also married a McKenzie student), John Adams, M. H. Neely, R. C. Armstrong, L. M. Fowler, J. T. L. Annis, W. J. Joyce, John F. Neal, H. B. Phillips. Of lawyers and statesmen, W. S. Hernndon, Geo. N. Aldredge, W. J. Swain, W. R. Collard, W. L. Crawford and many others who graced the courts and legislative halls of this and other states. Judge B. F. Fuller, a Baptist, and author of "History of the Baptist Church in Texas," was a McKenzie student. Milton Ragsdale, brother of Smith Ragsdale, long one of the teachers at McKenzie, was one of the first graduates of McKenzie Institute. He engaged for many years in the teaching profession. His wife was the daughter of Abner McKenzie, and her mother was the widow of John B. Denton. Both Professor and Mrs. Ragsdale are still living in Dallas.

The time would fail us to go into details concerning

numerous other small schools which arose in the 'fifties—some to endure but for a day, and others to continue a struggling existence for many years. The Starrville Female High School, with Milton H. Porter as principal, appears in the minutes of the East Texas Conference in 1855. The Murray Institute, located west of Jefferson, in Upshur County, was started as a private academy in 1856 or 1857 by Rev. J. J. Clark, a Methodist preacher from Tennessee, and father of Rev. I. W. Clark. The school flourished for many years, and did a splendid work. Andrew Female College, at Huntsville, and Paine Female College, at Goliad, we have noticed in a former connection. In 1856 and 1857 Thomas H. Ball—father of a better known Thomas H. Ball of our day—was president of the school at Huntsville. The Paine Institute at Goliad reported fifty-three students in 1857. The Waco Female Institute, mention of which has been made before, had its origin in 1857, when Franklin C. Wilkes was appointed agent, in connection with Waco station. The Seguin Male and Female College, with J. W. Phillips president, appears the same year. The Bastrop Academy, whose rise has been noted, was divided in 1857, the female department being known thereafter as Bastrop Female Academy, and the male department being organized into the Bastrop Military Institute, with Rev. Col. R. T. P. Allen, A. M., a distinguished educator from Kentucky, as superintendent. The Institute was continued under the patronage of the Texas Conference, and for many years Col. Allen and his school wielded a powerful influence for good throughout that section. The catalogue of 1858 shows an enrollment of ninety-two students, listed in order of merit in their respective departments; and standing next to the head of the list is the name of Joseph D. Sayers, afterwards governor of Texas. The Fairfield Female Institute, Rev. H. V. Philpott principal, is advertised in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in

1856. The *Southern Methodist Almanac* for 1855 reports, in addition to the schools already mentioned, the "Methodist Female Institute, at Tyler," with about 30 pupils, and the "Cedar Mountain Academy, Dallas County, about 75."

At the risk of extending this chapter beyond due limits, and also of incurring the charge of introducing too much matter from one source, or from one family, we append a few more items from the "literary remains" of O. M. Addison. Our object is not to draw attention to a name, but simply to convey a reflection of the times, as faithful and complete as possible; and this must be done from those sources only which have come into our hands. The Addisons wrote much, and gathered together much which others had written; and all of this collection is in our possession. But even at that it is no easy task to select from the scrap pile, composed of a miscellaneous and unorganized mass of things, like leaves which the winds of fifty years have blown together, that which is real history and piece it together in an orderly and readable fashion. It is a task which should have more insight, time and patience expended upon it than this writer possesses. But so much as he has he will continue to employ until the story is finished.

From an unmarried preacher's account book we may derive some curious information as to expenses and prices which prevailed in 1855-56-57:

To ferriage on way to Conf .....	1.15
" Fare on Railroad .....	5 00
" " " Steamboat .....	10 00
" Hack fare in Galveston .....	7 50
" Daguerrotype (group) .....	5 00
" Kid gloves .....	1 25
" Cigars .....	50
" Baker on the discipline .....	75
" Repairing Buggy .....	1 25
" Servant fee in Galveston .....	50
" Missionary Anniversary \$5. Tract do. \$5. ....	10 00
" Washing bill in Galveston .....	2 00
" Repairing boots in " .....	20

To one pair shoes bot of Sledge & Buck .....	3 00
" umbrella .....	2 00
" Bridle .....	75
" 6 hankfs 50 .....	3 00
" 3 undershirts 80 .....	2 40
" 1 cake shaving soap .....	25
" I Deges to one pair pants .....	10 00
" making 1 pair pantaloons .....	2 00
" 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ yds black cloth 6.50 .....	11 37 $\frac{1}{2}$
" Trimmings for coat .....	2 50
" Harvey & Warner 1 vest .....	5 00
" 4 pr socks 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ .....	1 50
To freight on luggage from Brownsville .....	14 98
" repairing boots .....	1 00
" Repairing watch .....	2 75
" horse shod 75 ferriage 20 .....	95
" book Nelson on Infidelity .....	50
" riding whip .....	10
" repairing bridle & girth .....	1 25
" repairing saddlebags .....	2 50
" beggar Woman .....	1 00
" stake rope .....	75
" watch chain .....	25
" dinner & horse feed .....	50

We have at hand the journal of the presiding elder of the Victoria district for 1857, which, however, is largely routine and personal. A few extracts from this will suffice. Beginning with a trip to Live Oak County we have:

March 5. At the distance of 18 miles we reached Mr. Cook's, where we turned our horses to grass and obtained dinner. The country is newly settled, and the people live in primitive style. The house of our entertainer was constructed of poles with a dirt floor. A couple of rough scaffolds for bedsteads, 2 old trunks & as many chairs constituted the furniture. Shortly after sunset we reached bro. Francis' and received a genuine welcome from a true hearted brother. Here we met with bro. Myers & lady, obtained corn for our horses & fared sumptuously.

March 6. In company with bro. Myers & wife rode to Oakville distant 10 miles. We drove to the only hotel in the place and were kindly welcomed by the landlord, who was sick in bed. At night I preached in the dining room of the hotel. After preaching the sheriff of the county invited me home with him. I went but was sorry. His establishment consisted of a single



log house, through the open cracks of which the cold north wind entered as if pursued by the furies. We entered by the landlord removing the door bodily and depositing it at a convenient distance, for it was not supplied with hinges or lock. Two beds and divers chairs and trunks crowded together left but little space on the dirt floor.

March 7.—This morning on returning to the tavern I found M. (Myers) & S. (Stringfield). Our landlord's library consisted of two volumes of the recent acts of the legislature, one spelling book, the (life) of P. B. Barnum and a novel, "A Tale of Circumstantial Evidence." The latter, S., had selected for his morning reading, in which he was pretty well engaged until the time of preaching. In the afternoon our Conf met in the other room of the tavern, and as there were no members but the preachers we elected bro. John Francis & Jas Green stewards. Three hundred dollars were appropriated for the support of the work (Live Oak and Uvalde Mission), a small amt had been raised on the Miss out of which the stewards paid me my first qr claim \$3.25. Up to the present time neither of the preachers had been to Uvalde country, an intervening distance of more than one hundred miles separating the two portions of the work. Bro M. was in favor of having Uvalde assigned to him separately, leaving Live Oak to S. I finally concluded to send M. to Uvalde to explore the country

Monday, April 6—A heavy frost last night again laid the corn low. Drove to Texana & heard bro Devilbiss preach at night.

Sunday 12.—During the night the mercury fell down to a wintry temperature, sleet and ice without made fire necessary within.

Friday, 17.—In company with bro. C. (Cooley) drove to Judge Wofford's and spent the night. Soon after our arrival learned the overseer had that day whipped one of the most valuable negroes to death. C. and I, at the invitation of the judge's father, started to the quarter to see the corpse, but meeting the judge on the way he turned us back, saying "it was of no use." As C. knew him better than myself I advised him to induce Wofford to have an inquest held on the body of the servt and place the overseer under arrest.

Saturday 18.—A stiff cold norther sprang up this morning making blankets and overcoats necessary. Had a conversation with Wofford, who declined taking any steps to have the murder investigated, fearing, as he stated, by so doing to frighten off his overseer, by which he would lose the value of his negro. The overseer had a growing crop which W. thought might be made available if action were delayed a few months. I told him he by silence was liable to be brought in as accessory after the fact, and left, disgusted at the meanness of such a calculating wretch.

Monday, August 10—In company with bro. F. M. Box an exhorter set out for Uvalde Miss. Drove 12 miles to Yorktown & dined with bro. King's. Late in the afternoon resumed the road intending to travel at night, but a threatening rain storm coming up we were glad to seek refuge at a house 5 miles from our noon stopping place.

Tuesday 11—It rained but little after all & before daylight we were under way. Reached Dr. Sutherland's at Sulphor Springs 35 miles, having crossed the Eceto & Cibolo. The rain of the night before had extended a few miles, but the greater part of the road was quite dry. The dry weather having killed the crops the farmers had taken advantage of a recent rain on the Cibolo & planted corn. I saw some just coming up.

Wednesday 12—The Dr returning from San Antonio in the stage before breakfast & recognizing me would have no pay for our entertainment. Our own corn we had hauled from Yorktown, for which we paid \$1.75 per bushel. Dined at Shaw's 18 miles and at sundown drove into San Antonio 12 miles. Hunted up bro. Belvin with whom I put up and accompanied him to the presbyterian prayer meeting and spent the night with the pastor Bunting.

Thursday, 13—Before sunrise enjoyed a fine bath in the San Antonio river, breakfasted at Mrs. Van Vleet's with Bunting and after dinner drove 25 miles to Castrovile and put up at a very decent hotel kept by a Frenchman named Tarde. . . . The whole country in the vicinity of San Antonio is parched up & grass all gone. The prospect changes near Castroville, as it is evident they had recent rains.

Friday 14—A bill of \$2 each was paid this morning and the

journey resumed. Ten miles brought us to the little Dutch village of Quihi situated on a creek of that name — miles farther we crossed the Verd at another village called New Fountain. The country is settled with French & Dutch. Four miles brought to bro Harpers on the Hondo where we were expected, & found a cordial welcome. Dined and spent the afternoon.

Saturday 15—Supplied with a mule we left our horses to rest and at 8 o'clock reached the Sabinal the place of the qr. m. having driven about 30 miles. Preached in the afternoon from the Prodigal son & at night Behold now is the accepted time 2 converts

Sunday 16—Felt unwell, bro. Myers preached a funeral sermon at 11. Preached at 3 and after a short lecture on the ordinance baptized seventeen children. at night I made a talk on the communion & administered the ordinance mourners were then invited—six were converted—closed the meeting 16 having joined the church

Some details of the conference at Waco in 1857, held by Bishop Kavanaugh, we have from journal of Addison, who came up from his year on the Victoria district:

Tuesday, Dec. 8—Road very bad. . . . Reached Waco about 4 o'clock and found a home at Capt. Barrow's, an old Texian. Horses very tired. 25 miles. At night Thrall preached to a large audience from He that goeth forth weeping &c.

Wednesday, Dec. 9—Conference met this morning and was opened by Bp Kavanaugh, a stout homely man. . . . There were but few absentees among the preachers, & the morning session was very harmonious. In the afternoon I met for the first time in council with the bishop & presiding elders. The plan of each district was first written out by the bishop at the suggestion of the elder after which the preachers were stationed, each elder taking a man by turn. At night bro Phillips preached the Conference sermon, from Ezekiel 33: "O son of man I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel," &c. This was a plain, pointed and powerful discourse.

Thursday, Dec. 10—A busy day again in the Conf room & in the cabinet. Bishop Kavanaugh preached tonight from "If

ye then be risen with Christ &c.” The early part of the discourse was a masterly exposition of the context. After speaking half hour he became warm & wound up a sermon of over an hour with an overwhelming burst of eloquence.

Friday Dec. 11—A busy day in conference. The council met afternoon & night. Our session bids fair to be a protracted one. There are 35 applications for admission on trial and not quite that number of vacancies.

Saturday 12—Business progressing finely. The bishop dispensed with the council this afternoon at which time the conference had its session at night J. C. Wilson & the Bishop made missionary speeches 500 acres of land & \$1500 were subscribed.

Sunday 13—Heard the bishop preach at 11 from Now then we are ambassadors from God. In the afternoon Rev. R. W. P. Allen from “Without controversy great is the mystery &c at night Gillespie from “And Jesus suffered him not, but said go to thy friends & show &c

Monday 14—My good friend bro Shapard has been writing to some of the preachers against my being sent back to the Victoria Dis. His wife’s condition does not allow him to leave her & he is trying to have bro Carl put in my place. Progressed with business rapidly today.

Tuesday 15—In the council the P E were appointed Complaints were urged against Thrall & reasons assigned for his removal from the District. He plead his cause & stated if he were removed he saw nothing else to do but ask a transfer. When he retired no one voted for him & he was removed. Seat was then put in his stead M Yell having served his 4 years on the Springfield Dis. his place became vacant, he was assigned to the Waco circuit & Aff. Miss. I was consulted as to my willingness to take the Springfield Dis. and agreed so to do & was appointed. . . . Thrall getting out of the notion of transferring was placed on Austin Dis. & J. W. Shipman put on Victoria Dis.

Wednesday 16—Today the appointments were finished late in the evening. The winding up was the most difficult part many of the previous appointments had to be changed. The Mission Com. met after supper, but being limited by an appropriation of only \$4000 we had great difficulty in dividing it among the needy districts. Finding we were not likely to settle

the matter in the short time allotted us we adjourned & proceeded to the church to have the appointments read. Found the Conf in session and some of the preachers speaking against time until the bishop could come. The bp. made a good talk, announced the stations of the preachers & adjourned amid the confusion usually attending such occasions.

Thursday 17—A heavy rain last night left the streets in a sad plight this morning. The horses came in early and everything was astir. My ponys looks like starvation—they had been to a place scarce of corn, & every thing else. From the complaints I was not alone in this misfortune. Nothing was to be seen in the early part of the day but preachers dressed in travelling togery and getting ready for a departure home.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE YEARS 1858-1859

THE fourth General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was held at Nashville, Tenn., in May, 1858. The delegates from the conferences in Texas were as follows: East Texas Conference—C. C. Gillespie, J. W. Fields, S. A. Williams, J. B. Tullis, N. W. Burkes; reserves, Jefferson Shook, J. T. P. Irvine. Texas Conference—R. Alexander, J. W. Phillips, J. W. Whipple, W. H. Seat, R. W. Kennon, M. Yell, W. C. Lewis; reserves, Daniel Morse, Daniel Carl, Asbury Davidson.

Among the important actions of general church interest taken at this conference was the following resolution, adopted by a majority of one hundred and forty-one to seven:

*Resolved*, By the delegates of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in General Conference assembled, that the rule forbidding "the buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them," be expunged from the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

*Resolved*, that in adopting the foregoing resolutions, this Conference express no opinion in regard to the African slave-trade, to which the rule in question has been understood to refer.

The new publishing house at Nashville, provided for and located by the last General Conference, had been completed and was in operation. The conference in session at Nashville elected John B. McFerrin as the head of this institution. Thomas O. Summers was elected edi-

tor of the *Quarterly Review*, and Holland N. McTyeire was elected editor of the Nashville *Christian Advocate*. There were no bishops elected at the conference of 1858.

The "Rio Grande Mission Conference" was authorized at this General Conference. Its territory was defined as "including all that part of the State of Texas west of the Texas Conference, including Fredericksburg." The Guadalupe river was the lower boundary line between the conferences; the upper boundary line was largely "guessed off," giving all that portion of the state west of the 100th meridian to the new conference. The division did not become effective until the appointments were made in the fall of 1858.

The East Texas Conference was held at Tyler, November 10-16, 1858, Bishop Pierce presiding, John W. Fields, secretary. The following were admitted on trial. William J. Popham, Sims K. Stovall, William H. McPhail, Jesse H. Walker, James M. Hall, Alfred B. Manion, William C. Collins, Charles D. Chandler, William B. Hill. The following were re-admitted: Archibald C. McDougald, John W. P. McKenzie, Jesse M. Boyd, Thomas W. Rogers, William W. Colder, Alexander R. Dixon, and James Graham.

The Discipline contains a new conference question—Who are received by transfer from other conferences? But in the answer to this question we are left in the dark as to where the transfers come from. Ezekiel Couch, James B. Rabb, Richard Lane, John Patillo, William T. Melugin, William Patillo, R. W. Thompson, and Alfred D. Parks were received by transfer at the East Texas Conference. From other sources we learn that Melugin came from the Tennessee Conference, and that Rabb and the Patillos came from the Alabama Conference. In addition to the list given, J. E. Carnes transferred from the Louisville Conference this year, and was appointed editor of the *Texas Christian Advocate*.

Two members of this conference had died during the

year—William P. Sansom and Bennett Elkins. From their brief memoirs we learn the following:

William P. Sansom was born in Tennessee in March, 1812. Married in 1835. Emigrated to Texas in 1837; licensed to preach in 1842, and in 1846 joined the East Texas Conference, of which he remained a useful and zealous member up to the time of his death.

Bennett Elkins was born in March, 1800, in South Carolina. Was married to Miss Frances Owen in 1820, and after her death was married to Miss Ann Forman, in 1833. Converted in his fourteenth year. Served about twenty-five years as a local preach. Admitted to the East Texas Conference in 1857, and appointed to Shook's Bluff Mission, on which he was serving with great acceptability when stricken with his last illness. On being asked if he was ready to die he replied, "I have made the necessary preparations for that long ago."

The statistics of the various charges of the conference are given at the beginning of this new quadrennium. But as formerly they are confined to membership figures—not a word about church property, finances or other items of church progress.

## SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
San Augustine Circuit.....	155	59	35	....	1
Shelbyville Mission.....	230	60	....	....	3
Carthage Circuit.....	280	266	21	12	6
Henderson Station.....	56	25	55		
Henderson Circuit.....	286	135	41	13	5
Mount Enterprise.....	134	38	7	3	3
Douglas.....	210	50	47	19	1
Melrose.....	227	117	64	....	3
Elysian Fields.....	151	70	37	27	
Mud Creek Mission.....	68	58	9	....	1
	1797	878	316	74	23

## MARSHALL DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Marshall Station.....	92	20			
Harrison Circuit.....	248	55	....	....	2
Harrison Colored Mission...	....	....	242	42	
Dangerfield Circuit.....	272	82	60	....	4
Coffeeville.....	166	86	25	35	4
Gilmer.....	300	75	75	20	6
Quitman.....	169	50	9	....	2
Linden.....	237	17	113	....	3
Mount Pleasant.....	312	14	15	13	5
	1796	399	539	110	26

## CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Clarksville Circuit.....	305	178	....	10	9
Boston.....	117	85	3	1	4
Red River Colored Mission..	....	....	22	14	
Paris Circuit.....	325	....	60	....	6
Honey Grove.....	214	13	7		
Bonham.....	240	40	17	....	6
Fannin Colored Mission....					
Greenville Circuit.....	245	46	7	9	12
Sulphur.....	233	41	2	....	6
Tarrant.....	114	60	4	....	2
	1793	463	122	34	45

## DALLAS DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Dallas Circuit.....	694	101	40	3	19
Sherman Mission.....	270	88	....	....	6
Kaufman Circuit.....	219	65	29	12	5
Alton.....	114	36	4	5	4
Border Mission.....	175	45	....	....	3
Canton Circuit.....	195	23	5	....	3
Rockwall.....	213	83	11	....	4
Athens.....	255	71	22	23	3
	2135	512	111	43	47

## PALESTINE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Palestine Circuit.....	384	357	26	47	6
Crockett Circuit.....	252	69	46	....	5
Cherokee.....	300	50	15	2	8
Rusk Station.....	73	27			
Jacksonville Circuit.....	553	146	20	6	9
Tyler Circuit.....	432	79			
Tyler Colored Mission.....	....	....	190	281	
Sumpter Mission.....	97	115	....	28	1
Randolph.....	173	68	10	....	2
	2264	911	307	364	31



## WOODVILLE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Woodville Circuit.....	88	43	9	9	3
Jasper Circuit.....	212	37	67	37	4
Newton.....	173	101	....	....	7
Madison.....	58	45	57	12	3
Beaumont.....	18	55	8	23	
Liberty.....	42	32	100	26	1
Livingston.....	100	44	23	7	2
Marion.....	100	50			
Shook's Bluff Mission.....	20				
	811	407	264	114	20

*Recapitulation*

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Total this year.....	10,596	3570	1659	739	192
Total last year.....	10,183	2387	1668	291	192
Increase.....	413	1183	....	448	
Decrease.....	....	....	9		

The following are the appointments made in 1858, from which it will be seen that the Greenville and the Rusk districts appear, and a preacher is thrust as far west as the "Decatur Mission." The reader will discover other new places mounting into the list of appointments.

## SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

WILLIAM K. WILSON, P. E.  
 San Augustine, William J. Joyce,  
 Alexander Hinkle, Sup'y.  
 Milam, Martin Matthews.  
 Shelbyville Mission, Henderson D.  
 Palmer.  
 Carthage, William W. Colder.  
 Mount Enterprise, Isaac W. Overall.  
 Douglass Mission, Isaac Taylor.  
 Melrose, Laban B. Hickman.  
 Jasper, Solomon T. Bridges.  
 Newton, Rufus B. Womack.  
 Buena Vista Mission, Alexander W.  
 Goodgion.

## MARSHALL DISTRICT

JAMES T. P. IRVINE, P. E.  
 Marshall, Richard Lane  
 Harrison and Colored Mission, Wil-  
 liam B. Hill, Alfred B. Manion.  
 Dangerfield, John Patillo.  
 Coffeetown, James B. Rabb.  
 Gilmer, James A. Sruggs.  
 Linden, Charles L. Hamill.  
 Elysian Fields, John C. Woolam.  
 Jefferson, John Adams.  
 Macedonia, to be supplied.

## CLARKSVILLE DISTRICT

HUGH B. HAMILTON, P. E.  
 Clarksville and McKenzie Institute,  
 William T. Melugin.  
 Boston and Colored Mission, Thomas  
 W. Rogers.  
 Savannah and Colored Mission,  
 James L. Terry.  
 Starksville and Colored Mission,  
 James M. Hall.  
 Paris, James Graham.  
 Paris Circuit, John S. Matthias.  
 Honey Grove, Calvin J. Cocke.  
 Bonham, Alexander R. Dixon.  
 Paris Female Institute, to be sup-  
 plied.  
 McKenzie Institute, John W. P.  
 McKenzie, Principal.

## DALLAS DISTRICT

JAMES R. BELLAMY, P. E.  
 Dallas, Archibald C. McDougal.  
 McKinney, Benjamin W. Scrivener.  
 Sherman, Ezekiel Couch.  
 Gainesville Mission, Andrew Cum-  
 ming.  
 Decatur Mission, William E. Bates.  
 Denton, William Patillo.  
 Rockwall, Jacob M. Binkley.  
 Kaufman, Matthew H. Neely.

## GREENVILLE DISTRICT

LEVI R. DENNIS, P. E.  
 Greenville, Jesse M. Boyd.  
 Sulphur, Harvey W. Cumming.  
 Tarrant Mission, John H. Low.  
 Mount Pleasant, Joseph W. H.  
 Hamill.  
 Quitman, to be supplied.  
 Canton, Richard W. Thompson.  
 Garden Valley, Lewis C. Crouse.

## PALESTINE DISTRICT

JOHN B. TULLIS, P. E.  
 Palestine, Marshall C. Simpson.  
 { Kickapoo, Acton Young.  
 { Anderson Colored Mission, to be  
 { supplied.  
 Tyler, John W. Field.  
 { Smith, Milton H. Porter, Sims K.  
 { Stovall.  
 { Smith Colored Mission, to be sup-  
 { plied.  
 Jacksonville, Alfred D. Parks,  
 Charles L. Chandler.  
 Athens, John W. Chalk.  
 Henderson, Francis M. Stovall.  
 Henderson Circuit, Neil Brown.  
 Fowler Institute, Napoleon W.  
 Burke, Principal.  
 Starrville Female High School, John  
 T. Kennedy. Agent for Starr-  
 ville Female High School, to be  
 supplied.

## RUSK DISTRICT

SAMUEL A. WILLIAMS, P. E.

Rusk, Robert S. Finley.

Cherokee, Robert Crawford, S. Box,  
Supny.

Sumter Mission, Jarvis L. Angell.

Randolph Mission, Nathan S. Johnson.

Marion, Abner Brown.

Shook's Bluff Mission, Edward P.  
Rogers.

## WOODVILLE DISTRICT

JEFFERSON SHOOK, P. E.

Woodville, Everett L. Armstrong.

Livingstone, David M. Stovall.

Liberty, Harwin M. Moore, J. G.  
Hardin, Supny.

East Bay Mission, William C. Collins.

Beaumont Mission, Richard A.  
Wooten.Village Creek Mission, William J.  
Popham.

Madison, William H. McPhail.

Texas Christian Advocate, J. E. Carnes, editor.

John N. Hamill transferred to Indian Mission Conference.

George W. Harrell transferred to Rio Grande Mission Conference.

Joseph A. West transferred to Western Virginia Conference.

Jesse H. Walker transferred to Indian Mission Conference.

William E. George transferred to Texas Conference.

C. C. Gillespie transferred to Louisiana Conference.

The Texas Conference was held at Austin, November 24-30, 1858, with Bishop Pierce presiding, James W. Shipman, secretary.

The following were admitted on trial: Francis E. Wilkinson, Isaac J. Wright, John M. Whipple, John Pruenzing, Solomon Fehr, Marcus L. Tunnell, Egbert H. Osborne, W. R. D. Stockton, H. G. Horton, Eli Y. Seale, August Tampke. Readmitted: John Carpenter, Thomas G. Gilmore, Robert H. Belvin, David Coulson. Transfers received: Samuel C. Littlepage, Wm. E. George, Jesse Boring, John J. Pittman, H. G. Horton, George W. Harwell. Littlepage was from the Missouri Conference; Boring and Horton were from the Georgia Conference. In the case of Horton we have another instance, according to the minutes, of the transfer of a man and of his admission on trial into the conference to which he was transferred the same year. Perhaps Brother Horton, who is still living, can explain this.

The conference had lost one member by death during the year—Wm. F. Hubert. He was born in Madison County, Miss., September 26, 1826. In 1839 his father, the Rev. Robert L. Hubert, a local preacher, removed to Texas and settled in Washington County. He gave two

sons to the traveling ministry within the bounds of the Texas Conference. William F. was admitted on trial in 1849 at Seguin. He served first as junior preacher on the Richmond circuit, then was successively in charge of San Jacinto mission, Mill Creek circuit, Richmond, Waxahachie, Springfield circuits, and Corpus Christi station. In 1857 he was returned to the Springfield circuit, and for the year 1858 appointed to the Port Lavacca and Indianola charge, but during the year he fell a victim to a terrible scourge of yellow fever. He was stricken while out on his circuit, and died at the home of Col. Benjamin F. Hill. In all his ministerial career he deputed himself as a man of God, and had the confidence and esteem of the people and of his brethren, who deeply mourned his untimely death. He was buried near the place of his death, in Calhoun County.

A quadrennial membership report within the Texas Conference, by charges and districts, follows:

## GALVESTON DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Galveston.....	150	20	....	....	1
Galveston Colored Mission..	....	....	70	36	
Lynchburg.....	85	65	12	16	6
Cedar Bayou.....	75	50	20	....	2
Houston and Af. Mission...	89	29	110	20	1
Brazoria.....	77	55	104	25	1
Oyster Creek and Af. Miss..	38	47	43	17	1
Richmond.....	40	21	28	17	
San Felipe and Af. Miss....	15	3	41		
Galveston German Mission..	35				
Houston German Mission...	37	25			
Union Chapel.....	119	1	49		
	760	316	477	131	12

## LaGRANGE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
LaGrange . . . . .	54	2	6	5	1
Fayetteville . . . . .	148	16	44	10	3
Hallettsville . . . . .	95	56	12	15	1
Navidad . . . . .	129	64	12	42	
Columbus . . . . .	152	109	25	40	4
Columbus African Mission . . . . .		5		90	
Brenham . . . . .	156	45	52	52	4
Bellville . . . . .	137	41	41	20	3
Egypt and Wharton . . . . .	33	45	44	43	
San Bernard . . . . .	40	11	17	3	1
Matagorda and Trespacios	30	20	20	12	
Old Caney African Mission . . . . .					
	974	414	273	332	17

## HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Huntsville . . . . .	137	20	74	6	2
Cold Spring . . . . .	139		53		2
Montgomery and Danville . . . . .	161	15	10	5	5
Madisonville . . . . .	189	139	30	25	9
Anderson . . . . .	152	35	40	96	1
Plantersville . . . . .	160	47	94	7	5
Montgomery African Miss . . . . .			7	5	
Washington . . . . .	63	113			1
Chapell Hill . . . . .	190	20	123		1
Brazos African Mission . . . . .			80		
	1191	389	511	144	26



## SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Springfield.....	264	64	58	26	9
Marlin.....	116	21	20		
Owensville.....	101	....	14	2	2
Centreville.....	100	24	20	....	1
Navasoto.....	200	....	27	....	1
Waxahatchie.....	221	7	39	8	5
Corsicana.....	150	85	30	30	3
Boonville.....	91	26	26	5	
Trinity African Mission....					
Fairfield.....	230	50	45	25	2
	1473	277	279	96	23

## WACO DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Waco.....	158	42	....	....	3
Waco Ct. and African Miss.	15	....	27	2	
Belton.....	286	68	6	6	2
Cameron.....	226	73	90	....	4
Port Sullivan African Miss..	....	÷....	67	12	
Caldwell.....	107	64	20	2	5
Georgetown Mission.....	200	170	2	15	7
Hamilton Mission.....	154	61	3	1	3
West Yegua Mission.....	65	17	6	....	1
	1211	495	221	38	25

## FORT WORTH DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Fort Worth Mission.....	94	13	....	....	1
Weatherford Mission.....	290	85	6	....	6
Fort Graham Mission.....	153	104	1	....	6
Meridian Mission.....	70	19	1	....	1
Gatesville.....	120	138	2	5	6
Hillsborough.....	261	62	....	....	3
Fort Belknap Mission.....	46	18	....	....	3
	1034	439	10	5	26

## AUSTIN DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Austin.....	128	28	103	32	
Austin Circuit.....	153	59	98	....	2
Bastrop.....	88	8	12	....	3
Bastrop Circuit.....	161	36	61	21	
Bastrop African Mission....					
Perryville.....	103	70	6	6	5
Cedar Creek.....	153	119	7	13	4
Lockhart.....	183	41	35	18	6
Perdenales.....	158	62	4	13	3
Upper Colorado Mission....	51	40	2	....	2
	1178	463	328	103	25

## SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
San Antonio.....	39	19	14	16	2
Cibolo.....	100	86	10	36	1
Seguin.....	55	39	30	9	
Seguin Circuit.....	74	129	10	15	2
Gonzales.....	87	93	....	88	3
Gonzales Circuit.....	312	219	....	11	3
Helena Mission.....	94	101	....	3	1
San Marcos.....	277	41	100	....	6
Gonzales African Mission...	....	....	89		
	1038	727	253	178	18

## VICTORIA DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Victoria.....	70	15	64	10	
Goliad.....	102	31	37	2	1
Port Lavaca and Indianola..	33	2	14	11	2
Texana.....	207	31	45	7	4
Clinton and Guadalupe Afri- can Mission.....	105	32	15	24	2
Corpus Christi Mission.....	33	5	10	5	
Refugio Mission.....	38	5	....	....	1
Live Oak Mission.....	18	4			
Brownsville Mission.....	10				
	616	125	185	59	10

## NEW BRAUNFELS MISSION DISTRICT

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
New Braunfels German Miss.	86	27			
Victoria German Mission...	42	5			
Yorktown German Mission.	9	6			
Industry German Mission..	56	24	....	....	1
LaGrange German Mission.					
Bastrop German Mission...	53	5	....	....	2
Medina Circuit.....	95	116	5	21	4
Uvalde.....	43	75	5	8	2
New Fountain German Miss.	20	2			
Kerrville.....	49	37	....	1	1
Fredericksburg.....	37				
Llano.....	78	5	....	....	1
	568	302	10	30	11

*Recapitulation*

	White Members	White Prob's.	Colored Members	Colored Prob's.	Local Preachers
Total this year.....	10,043	3947	2547	1116	193
Total last year.....	8,808	2500	2184	1014	178
Increase.....	1,235	1447	363	102	15

The appointments made for the Texas Conference, and the first list of appointments made for the Rio Grande Mission Conference—made and announced at the same time and place—are given below:

#### GALVESTON DISTRICT

FRANKLIN C. WILKES, P. E.

Galveston, Lewis B. Whipple.  
Galveston African Mission, to be supplied.  
Cedar Bayou, to be supplied.  
Lynchburg, William Rees.  
Houston and African Mission, William R. Fayle, B. L. Peel, Sup'y.  
Brazoria and African Mission, Benjamin D. Dashiell.  
Columbia and African Mission, Horatio V. Philpott.  
Sandy Point, Byron S. Carden.  
Velasco Mission, Valentine H. Hey.  
Richmond, James M'Leod.  
Union Chapel, James E. Ferguson.  
Book Agent of the Texas Conference, James W. Shipman.  
Evangelische Apogete, Peter Moelling, Editor.

#### LAGRANGE DISTRICT

CHARLES W. THOMAS, P. E.

LaGrange and African Mission, Homer S. Thrall.  
Rutersville Circuit, Charles J. Lane.  

{	Navidad, Quin M. Menifee.
	Navidad African Mission, to be supplied.
	Columbus, Wesley Smith.

{	Eagle Lake African Mission, to be supplied.
	Brenham, Henry D. Hubert, Thos. Wooldridge, Sup'y.

Union Hill, Adley A. Killough.  
Bellville, David G. Bowers.  
San Felipe and African Mission, George D. Parker.  
Sam Bernard and African Mission, to be supplied.  

{	Egypt and Wharton, William T. Harris.
	Old Caney African Mission, to be supplied.

Matagorda and Trespacios Mission, Egbert H. Osborne.

#### HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

ROBERT W. KENNON, P. E.

Huntsville, James M. Wesson, Francis A. McShan, Sup'y.  
Cold Spring, Hiram G. Carden.  
Montgomery and Danville, Thomas B. Buckingham.  
Madisonville, to be supplied.  
Anderson, Hiram M. Glass, C. L. Spencer, Sup'y.  
Plantersville, Job M. Baker.  
Montgomery African Mission, to be supplied.  
Washington, Urban C. Spencer.  
Chappell Hill, Benjamin F. Perry.  
Hempstead, one to be supplied, Daniel Morse, Sup'y.  
Brazos African Mission, William C. Lewis.  
Andrew Female College, Thomas H. Ball, President.  
Soule University, James M. Follansbee, Wm. G. Foote, Professors.

#### SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

OSCAR M. ADDISON, P. E.

Springfield, Henry W. South.  
Martin, Jackson L. Crabb.  
Owensville, James Rice.  
Centreville, George W. Burrows.  
Navasota, Francis E. Wilkinson.  
Waxahatchie, Thomas Whitworth, S. S. Yarborough, Sup'y.  
Corsicana, Drury Wamack.  
Tellico, William F. Compton.  
Boonville, Joel T. Davis.  
Fairfield, James H. Addison.  
Trinity African Mission, William E. George.

#### WACO DISTRICT

JOSIAH W. WHIPPLE, P. E.

{	Waco, Samuel C. Littlepage.
	Waco African Mission, Mordecai Yell.
	Bosque Mission, William M. Lambden.



WACO DISTRICT—*Continued*

Belton, Rufus Y. King.  
 Cameron, William G. Nelms.  
 San Gabriel Mission, Thomas G. Gilmore.  
 Port Sullivan African Mission, Joseph P. Sneed.  
 { Caldwell, John M. Whipple.  
 { Caldwell African Mission, to be supplied.  
 Post Oak Island, to be supplied.  
 Georgetown, Hiram M. Burrows.  
 Florence Mission, John Carpenter.  
 Hamilton, Isaac H. Wright.  
 American Bible Society, Robert Alexander, Agent.

## FORT WORTH DISTRICT

JAMES G. JOHNSON, P. E.

Fort Worth, Albert G. May.  
 Weatherford Mission, James M. Jones.  
 Buchanan Mission, William G. Veal.  
 Meridian Mission, William L. Kidd.  
 Gatesville Mission, John R. White.  
 Hillsborough, Walter S., South, Fountain P. Ray, Sup'y.  
 Fort Belknap Mission, Pleasant Tackett.  
 Keechi Mission, to be supplied.

## AUSTIN DISTRICT

ISAAC G. JOHN, P. E.

Austin, William H. Seat.  
 { Austin Circuit, Joshua H. Shapard.  
 { Webberville African Mission, David Coulson.  
 Bastrop and African Mission, Robert T. P. Allen.  
 Bastrop Circuit, John W. B. Allen.  
 Bastrop Military Institute, Robert T. P. Allen, Superintendent, John Carmer, Joshua B. Whittenberg, Professors.  
 Cedar Creek Mission, Thomas F. Cook.  
 { San Marcos, Buckner Harris.  
 { San Marcos African Mission, to be supplied.  
 Lockhart, William A. Smith.  
 Blanco, Benjamin A. Kemp.  
 San Saba Mission, Marcus L. Tunnell.

## VICTORIA DISTRICT

ASBURY DAVIDSON, P. E.

Victoria, Orcenith A. Fisher.  
 Lavacca Mission, Gideon W. Cottingham.  
 Indianola Mission, Robert N. Drake.  
 { Texana, Allen M. Box.  
 { Jackson African Mission, to be supplied.  
 Hallettsville, Daniel Carl.  
 Gonzales, James C. Wilson.  
 { Gonzales Circuit, Thomas F. Windsor.  
 { Gonzales African Mission, to be supplied.  
 Seguin, John W. Phillips, and President of Seguin Male and Female College.  
 { Seguin Circuit, William P. Reed, and Agent of Seguin Male and Female College.  
 { Seguin African Mission, to be supplied.

## GALVESTON GERMAN DISTRICT

CHARLES A. GROTE, P. E.

Galveston German Mission, Solomon Fehr.  
 Houston German Mission, Ulrich Steiner.  
 Industry German Mission, Edward Schneider.  
 Victoria German Mission, John Pruenzing.  
 Bastrop German Mission, John C. Kopp.  
 Austin German Mission, to be supplied.

Richard W. Thompson, Alfred D. Parks, transferred to East Texas Conference.

John C. Kolbee, transferred to Pacific Conference.

## SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

Ivy H. Cox, P. E.

San Antonio, Jesse Boring.  
 Medina Mission, Geo. W. Harwell.  
 Uvalde Mission, H. G. Horton.  
 Cibolo, Eli Y. Seale.  
 Kerrsville, Oliver B. Adams.  
 Mason Mission, to be supplied.  
 Pleasanton, Thomas B. Ferguson.  
 Eagle Pass Mission, Jasper K. Harper.

## BROWNSVILLE DISTRICT

DAVID W. FLY, P. E.

Brownsville Mission, Robert P. Thompson.

Point Isabel &amp; Brazos Santiago Mission, David W. Fly.

Rio Grande City &amp; Roma Mission, to be supplied.

Laredo Mission, to be supplied.

## NEW BRAUNFELS GERMAN DISTRICT

JOHN W. DEVILBISS, P. E.

New Braunfels, August Engel.

Fredericksburg Mission, Frederick Vordenbaumen.

Llano Circuit, to be supplied.

San Antonio Mission, August Tampke.

New Fountain Mission, John A. Shaper.

Yorktown Mission, Gustavus Elly.

## GOLIAD DISTRICT

ROBERT H. BELVIN, P. E.

Goliad, James W. Cooley.

Corpus Christi, John L. Harper.

Refugio Mission, John S. Gillett.

Clinton Mission, Preston W. Hobbes.

Helena Mission, W. R. D. Stockton.

Sandies Mission, John I. Pittman.

Oakville Mission, Robert W. Pierce.

While a large portion of the territory of the Rio Grande Conference had already been pioneered, it remained for the forces of this new conference to more completely survey and occupy the ground—to kill out or drive out the Indians, and to establish the landmarks for a future great conference—the West Texas. At least two newcomers to this field may properly receive special notice here—Jesse Boring and Hamilton G. Horton—as the first returned to his native conference after ten years, and died there; the second still living and writing his historical notes. Dr. Boring (he was both a D.D. and an M.D.) had risen to prominence in Georgia Methodism before he was sent to California in 1849 as superintendent of the new Methodist mission there. After a few years he returned to Georgia. In the fall of 1858 he and Horton, the latter just ready to enter conference, came to Texas. Their appointments had already been made, Boring to San Antonio and Horton to Uvalde mission. The two traveled together by boat and stage over the long journey to San Antonio. "Here Dr. Boring and I parted company," says Horton. "I mounted a mustang, putting on a pair of spurs, buckling a big six-shooter around my waist and starting west for another hundred miles. Arriving on my work in December, I found every western cabin a fortification and the Comanche Indians

raiding the country on nearly every light of the moon. . . . Most of the men were then out in pursuit of the Indians, who had just raided through the country. Soon I was used to everything, and found the people brave and hospitable. Sunday following was our appointment eight miles down the country on the Sabinal in a log school house with dirt floor. At the hour of service everybody in the community was there, the men all with rifles and six-shooters, they stacking the rifles in one corner of the house, but keeping the pistols around their waists, for they might be called into play at a moment's notice. My dragoon pistol was placed on the wooden stand by the side of the Bible."

During the following year an Indian raid broke up a camp-meeting on this work and resulted in loss of life. Says Horton:

In August we held a camp-meeting on the Sabinal just below where the Southern Pacific railroad now crosses that stream (the farthest west at that time of any camp-meeting in the State) assisted by the presiding elder and one other missionary. In the midst of the meeting just at the close of a late night service, a scout dashed into camp shouting Indians. . . . A large band of Indians had passed down within a few miles of the camp-meeting and stole a herd of horses six miles below us. Rations were prepared quickly, and most of the men were on horseback and off like a flash. They followed the Indians for several days, recaptured many of the horses and killed several of the raiders. The women, children and old men were hustled off at daylight to a rock house and fortified up. . . . In the fall of that year (1859) my last appointment before starting for Conference was in the school-house where I first preached on the mission. The night after services (full light of the moon) the men could not sleep, the dogs barked, some of them howled, and now and then some one would step to the window with rifle in hand and look out. Most of us had tied our ponies near the front doors to cedar posts, put there for the purpose to keep them from being stolen by Indians. Next morning the Comanches were in sight, and after a daylight breakfast old Mr. Bowles and

myself started out, I mounted and on my way to strike the San Antonio road eight miles up the country on my way to Conference, and Mr. Bowles afoot with bridle in hand to catch his pony, which he supposed was grazing a half mile off behind a large dense thicket. We parted just before we reached the woods, he to the right and I to the left. . . . A half mile beyond the woods I espied a company of men hurriedly driving a herd of horses directly toward me. Soon two of them separated from the rest and came in a gallop my way. I saw in a moment they were Indians armed with bows and arrows. . . . I soon distanced them and swept into the upper country. Mr. Bowles had entered the skirt of timber, ran into a band of Indians, and being old and afoot, he was instantly killed, his body being found afterwards. The two straggling Indians rejoined their comrades, and the band passed a few miles west of where I stopped, killed a man driving a pair of oxen, and then sped to the mountains.

Referring to the upper portion of his mission the writer says: "Over those mountains in 1859 Newman Patterson, as sheriff, and I as preacher, passed, both armed with pistols and rifles, he to collect taxes and I to call sinners to repentance. . . . Six or seven men were killed by the Indians that year in the bounds of my work. That year Bishop George F. Pierce passed through my work on his way to California. At Uvalde he preached for us during a two hours' stay, I loaning him my pistol until he could secure one at Fort Clark, when he returned it. In the Sabinal Canyon my home was at Mrs. Kincheloe's log castle." Of this noted frontier Methodist woman we have the following account:

Mrs. Kincheloe was a famous hostess and the most devout Methodist in that valley. From early childhood she was given to prayer and holy living. She was born in Texas in 1838, now Montgomery county, and her whole life of nearly eighty years was spent on the frontiers. I have just received notice of her death, which occurred December 31, 1917. Like all the pioneer settlers of that section, Mrs. Kincheloe endured privations and



hardships and in constant danger from the Indians. During the early part of the Confederate War, when her four elder children were quite small, Mr. Kincheloe left his family at home in company with a neighbor, Mrs. Bolen and two children, while he went to mill. During the several hours of his absence a band of Indians came to his home. The two frightened women hid the children the best they could and Mrs. Kincheloe made a brave demonstration with a rifle. The Indians attacked them, killing Mrs. Bolen and leaving Mrs. Kincheloe bleeding from fourteen arrow wounds and supposedly dead. After robbing the house and stealing the stock the Indians hurriedly departed. The two Bolen children escaped to the brush and made their way to a neighbor's, who summoned aid and went to the rescue. Mrs. Kincheloe recovered and died fifty-five years afterward.

Despite the terror of the Red Man this outpost mission of Texas reported forty-four members and twenty-nine received on probation in 1859.

At San Antonio the noteworthy feature of Dr. Boring's work was the founding of the San Antonio Female College. This began as a small school taught in the basement of the church. Dr. Boring induced Mrs. Jane T. H. Cross, a brilliant literary woman, and her husband, Dr. Joseph Cross, to come out from Tennessee and take charge of the work. The plan contemplated the founding of two schools— a female school to cost \$30,000, and a male school of like cost. The first \$30,000 was raised in San Antonio, and it was expected to raise the remainder in the States, but the threats of war suspended the enterprise.

We have had mention of Bishop Pierce's overland journey to California in 1859. The stage road from San Antonio through Uvalde and El Paso was laid out by United States army engineers in 1849 under Col. Joseph E. Johnston, and Jose Policarpo Rodriguez, afterwards a famous Mexican Methodist preacher, was one of the guides. Bishop Pierce tells us that he found the road a well-defined, beaten highway, "worn smooth and seem-



ingly as much used as though it led to a commercial city close at hand. The explanation is found in the fact of the trade from New Mexico, Chihuahua, and Sonora to San Antonio; the passage of government trains between the forts, and the heavy emigration along the southern route to California. . . . At this place (Uvalde)" he says, "I met Brother Horton, a young man whom I transferred from Georgia last Conference, and appointed to this outside circuit. I found him in fine health, pleased with his work; he is loved by the people, and likely to report a well-organized circuit at his Conference this fall. I preached for him at night in the Court-house, and on coming out he told me that in all my wanderings I had preached at last on the outskirts of civilization. From this point to Fort Clark is fifty miles, and I think there are only two settlements—one at Turkeyville, twenty miles distant, and the other at Alum Springs, still twenty miles further. The last settler I found to be a Methodist, holding on to his religion and waiting for the Gospel. I promised to embrace him and his family in the circuit next year."

The brethren assembled for the first session of the Rio Grande Conference at Goliad on November 9, 1859. Bishop Pierce had engaged to return from California and hold all the Texas conferences again that year. But he had not arrived at Goliad, and Dr. Jesse Boring was elected president, and John W. DeVilbiss was elected secretary. The business proceeded, and on the last day of the session the bishop hove in sight, more dead than alive. The bishop relates that he had arrived in San Antonio late, and sick from his interminable hardships and exposure. "I left at midnight, in another 'norther,' being the third I had faced on the trip," he writes. "The driver, to protect himself, got down into the boot under his seat, and trusting to the mules to keep the road, went to sleep. By and by, finding the motion of the stage very peculiar, and hearing the wheels crashing along among

the bushes, I called out to know what was the matter. There were three of us all buttoned up inside, and by a united effort we at last waked up our driver, and found ourselves nobody knew where. We were lost. The team had left the road, but whether they had gone to the right or the left, backward or forward, nobody could tell. We were in a fix, and no mistake. After all, I was to be disappointed in reaching the Conference. I had perilled life, endured more than I shall ever tell, to get there before adjournment, and now to be so utterly defeated by a sleepy-headed coachman—it was too bad. . . . That night was one to be marked. We were freezing, and could not stand still. So we journeyed north, east, west and south, around and across and about. Just before day we reached a creek, with steep, sandy, broken banks, which we must cross. My fellow-passengers got out to walk. Too sick to stand, much less to climb, I sat still, but soon found that to turn over was inevitable. I got out and left the driver to his doom. Presently here he came, sailing in the air, and the mules and the stage after him, over and over—such a pile. This was the consummation of trouble. We helped to set up the stage and left the driver to get the mules out of the creek as best he could, while we returned a little way to a house we had seen in search of fire. Finally all was ready, and we reached Goliad the following night. I was present at one session of the Conference.”

The Rio Grande Conference received Thomas F. Rainey, James M. Stringfield, Thomas Myers, and John J. F. Brunow on trial, and received Joseph Cross and John J. F. Brunow by transfer—so the minutes state. The membership statistics showed a total of 1257 white members, 377 probationers, 138 colored members, with 58 probationers, and 23 local preachers. Of this total the Brownsville district had 8 members and 1 probationer, perhaps the smallest membership of any district in the entire Church.

The Texas Conference for 1859 was held at Lagrange, November 16-23, Bishop Pierce president, J. W. Shipman secretary. The following were received on trial: Edwin P. Angel, Thomas W. Blake, Wm. C. Campbell, Peter W. Gravis, George W. Fleming, Alexander A. Smithwick. The following were received by transfer: Preston Phillips, John S. McGee, William Shegog. Jesse Hord, a superannuate, and Alexander A. Smithwick transferred to the Rio Grande Conference.

The East Texas Conference was held at Palestine, November 30-December 6, 1859, Bishop Pierce in charge, J. W. Fields secretary. The following were admitted on trial: William K. Masten, John R. Cox, Frederick C. Dowdy, William P. Petty, Samuel O. Kaempfer. Wm. H. Hughes, William G. Williams, and Jedidah B. Landreth were readmitted, and William Witcher, Thomas B. Ruble, William H. Gilliam, and Valerious C. Canon were received by transfer. Milton H. Porter was transferred to the Texas Conference, and Thomas B. Ruble to the Pacific Conference.

During the session of the conference at Palestine the Rev. Hugh B. Hamilton, a member of the conference, and presiding elder of the Clarksville district, died. He was born in Rutherford County, Tennessee, November 18, 1818, but was brought up in Jackson County, Alabama. He was converted and joined the Church in his sixteenth year. During the following year he joined a company of volunteers and engaged in an Indian war in Florida. During this campaign he backslid, and was not fully restored until 1843. In that year he was licensed to exhort in Arkansas. He was licensed to preach in 1844, and given an appointment in Little Rock. In 1846 he was married to a Miss Roberts, and removed to Texas. In 1849 he entered the East Texas Conference, of which he remained an active member until his death. During the winter of 1854 he lost his wife, and in 1855 he was again married, to Miss Cynthia Brinley. During the years 1857-58 he

was Tract Agent in the East Texas Conference. At the conference of 1858 he was appointed presiding elder of the Clarksville district, which office he filled with much acceptability and success. A few weeks before the close of his year's work he was taken down with typhoid fever. He lingered until the 5th of December—the day before his conference closed—when he fell asleep. Frequently during his closing days he imagined that some of his brethren returning from conference entered his room, and rousing up he asked again and again, “Where is my appointment?” But, in the words of his memoir, he had received an appointment, “but not to labor in this world of sin and sorrow, but among the blood-washed around the throne.” Dr. John H. McLean records that he received his license to preach from Hugh B. Hamilton at a quarterly conference on Clarksville circuit in 1859, and that a daughter of H. B. Hamilton, Miss Dona Hamilton, he later received into the Church and that she became a missionary to China.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN TEXAS

WE have not before had occasion to note the presence in Texas of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or, as it came to be called in the South after the division, the *Northern* Methodist Church. But during the years just preceding the outbreak of the War between the States the northern body had gradually extended its activities in the southwest, in the slave states of Missouri, Arkansas and Texas. Due to the pronounced antagonism of the Northern Church against slavery, the presence of their preachers in slave territory was a constant source of irritation, and gave rise to some very unfortunate events.

By the Plan of Separation agreed upon in 1844, when the original Methodist Episcopal Church was divided, the conferences, societies and stations along the border between the North and South were given the option of choosing the Church to which they would adhere. In accordance with this plan the Missouri Conference at its session of 1845 voted upon the matter, and a majority of its members voting for the Church, South, placed that conference under the jurisdiction of the Southern Church. But a few of the conference members refused to submit to the decision; some removed into northern territory and reunited with northern conferences; others remaining in the territory of their former ministrations, continued to preach independently as ministers of the "Methodist Episcopal Church." Among these last was Anthony Bewley, formerly of the Holston Conference in



Tennessee, but who had removed into Missouri and united with the Missouri Conference. "Mr. Bewley utterly refused to unite with the Southern Church," we are told,<sup>1</sup> "and labored in Southwestern Missouri from 1845 to 1848, working with his own hands for support, and preaching to those who remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church as he had opportunity. Several of our preachers labored with him as best they could." There were four or five preachers in Missouri and three in Arkansas who thus continued their relations to the Northern Church. These came together from time to time and appointed themselves to various portions of the territory, with Bewley as presiding elder, until the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1848, when the Missouri Conference of that Church was organized, to include Missouri and Arkansas. Four years later, or in 1852, the Arkansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed, and presently we find a preacher or two in connection with that conference appointed to Texas points. In 1855 Mr. Bewley was placed in charge of the "Texas Mission District," and he removed from Missouri to Texas, first locating in Johnson County, but later removed to Millwood, Collin County. The same year B. M. Scrivner was appointed to Bonham mission, but soon thereafter withdrew and joined the Church, South. Mr. Bewley continued to be the chief minister and representative of the Northern Church in Texas until 1859, residing at different times in Johnson and Collin counties, "holding prayer meetings, etc., but finding it impossible to do little besides."

In the meantime both the Church and secular press, North and South, was filled with controversy over the slavery question, and everywhere along the border ex-

<sup>1</sup> "A History of the M. E. Church in the South-West," by Rev. Charles Elliott, from which much of the material for this chapter is taken. The author's work is not a "history," however, so much as it is a venomous indictment of the South in general and the M. E. Church, South, in particular.

cited feelings were beginning to flare up and express themselves in mobs and raids which presaged the coming storm. On the 4th of March, 1859, a citizen's meeting was held at Millwood, Collin County, at which a protest was issued against the abolition sentiments of the Northern Methodists, and a committee was appointed to attend the meetings of that church to ascertain the facts. The proceedings of the Millwood meeting were published in the *Bonham Independent*, which commented editorially as follows: "We kindly warn these people (the Northern Methodists) to beware lest, in an hour when they least expect it, they will be visited by citizens entertaining adverse sentiments." On Friday, March 11, 1859, the Arkansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church convened at Timber Creek, near Bonham, Fannin County, with Bishop Janes presiding. During the opening session, we are told by our northern historian, "two preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Messrs. Dickson and Porter, attended as observers, spies, or reporters, which of these we say not." On Saturday it appears that a minister in sympathy with the Northern Church indulged in some inflammatory remarks upon the streets of Bonham, denouncing slavery, and announcing it as the intention of the Methodist Episcopal Church to extirpate that institution. On the same day a mass-meeting was held in Bonham, at which resolutions were adopted and a committee appointed to convey the sentiments of the meeting to the conference in session at Timber Creek. What ensued may be told by the two leading actors in the events of the following day. Says Bishop Janes:<sup>2</sup>

The Arkansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met at Timber Creek, Fannin county, Texas, on the 11th day

<sup>2</sup> Extracted from a lengthy article in the *Bonham Weekly Era*, this and a subsequent article, being a reply, appearing in an article, "The Disturbance in Texas," by Rev. E. L. Shettles, in *Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly*, January, 1911.

of last March. The Conference proceeded with its business pleasantly until Saturday evening, at which time the conference, being small, had so nearly finished its work that we might have adjourned, sine die, without inconvenience. But the brethren felt that it would be pleasant to retain their conference association over the Sabbath, and therefore adjourned to meet at six o'clock on Monday morning. This early hour was fixed upon because the brethren, most of whom came on horseback, desired to make a full day's ride on their return journey. I had also engaged a conveyance to take me to Sherman, about 30 miles, where I desired to take the Overland mail stage on Tuesday on my way to New York. Soon after I reached my lodgings some brethren came in and informed me that a public meeting had been held in the court house at Bonham, about three miles from the seat of the conference; that inflammatory speeches had been made; that great excitement had been created, and that they were coming the next day to drive us off, etc. I advised them to be careful not to give any just cause for offense, and prayerfully await the hour, and religiously meet its responsibilities. . . . A social meeting had been appointed for nine o'clock on Sunday morning. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be administered as a part of the service. It was announced that I would preach at eleven o'clock, and at the close of the service ordain deacons. Only one person had been elected to elder's orders, and he had been ordained on Friday. At the appointed hour all the ministers, and most of the members, in the place were present, and united in the exercises of the social meeting. A very devotional spirit was manifest. Near the close of the service the sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered, and the members of other churches present generally partook of it. At eleven o'clock I commenced the more public services. The house was not full, though, for the place, the audience was good in point of numbers. . . . While reading the Scripture lesson, I accidentally lifted up my eyes in the direction of the window, and saw the mob approaching the church. They were mounted on horseback, and marching with considerable regularity, as I judged from the momentary side-glance I had of them, in platoons of from three to five. The Bonham paper states their number to have been about two hundred. I think most of them were armed. The revolvers and

bowie knives of some of them were exposed. During prayer they gathered around the church. While singing the second hymn, as many as could crowded into the church. At the close of the singing I commenced giving out my text. At the same time their "spokesman," as he termed himself, standing about half way up the aisle, said, "Do I address the Bishop?" I made no reply, but continued giving out my text. He repeated, "Do I address the Bishop?" I then replied, "I am a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church." He then said, "I have an unpleasant duty to perform, and I presume it will be equally unpleasant to you." He then described the meeting at Bonham the previous day, when, looking around upon his associates, and pointing me to them, he said, "This large and respectable committee was appointed to wait upon you and the conference, and to make known to you the determination of the meeting." He then called upon one of his company to read to us the resolutions adopted by the meeting. (These were as follows:)

*Whereas*, as a secret foe lurks in our midst, known as the Northern Methodist church, entertaining sentiments antagonistic to the institution of slavery, and the manifest intention of these Northern coadjutors is to do away with slavery in these United States; and

*Whereas*, the further growth of this enemy would be likely to endanger the perpetuity of that institution in Texas; and

*Whereas*, sentiment diametrically opposed to the interests of the South have this day been proclaimed upon our streets by a minister of said Northern Methodist church; therefore,

*Be it Resolved*, that the Methodist church has separated into divisions, North and South, the organization of a Northern branch of that Church in our State as a screen behind which the emissaries of a Northern political faction known as abolitionists is dangerous to our interests, and ought not, therefore, to be tolerated by the people of Texas.

2. That the public denunciation of the institution of slavery, and the public action, by a minister of their church, to the effect that the Northern Methodists designed the extirpation of the institution in our land, heard in our streets this day, was a gross insult to our people, and should be boldly and summarily resented.



3. That the teaching and preaching of the ministers of that Church do not meet the views of the people of Fannin county, and must therefore be stopped.

4. That a committee be appointed to memorialize the Legislature to pass laws to punish the utterance of such seditious sentiments as are mentioned in resolution second, and that other counties be earnestly called on to consider the matter.

5. That a suitable committee be appointed to wait on the bishop and ministers now in Conference assembled, on Timber Creek, in this county, and warn them to withhold the further prosecution of said Conference, as its continuance will be well calculated to endanger the peace of this community.

6. That our motto be, Peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must.

7. That we hereby bind ourselves to cooperate in the future to do all we can to suppress abolitionism in our midst, and that henceforth we will suffer no public expression of abolition doctrines or sentiments in our streets or county to go unpunished.

When the reading was ended he resumed his remarks. . . . They knew their rights and would have them; peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must. That as the law could only reach us when overt acts were committed, they could not obtain legal redress. They were therefore, under the necessity of adopting this present mode of procedure in order to rid themselves of what they consider a dangerous organization in their midst. He begged me not to suppose that the move was a trifling or unimportant one. He assured me that nine-tenths of all the respectable men in the county were engaged in it; that they were determined to carry it out; and he forewarned me, that if their demand was not granted—if we did not cease to prosecute our church organization among them—blood would be spilt, and the responsibility would be on us. They would have no discussion. They demanded a categorical answer, yea or nay. They would give us two hours to determine what answer we would give. Then taking out his watch he said, "It is now half past eleven; in two hours we demand your answer, yea or nay"—and began to turn to leave. The speaker was excited, and his manner was vehement. The language and delivery of the address was inflammatory. As he began to withdraw I asked him his name. He stopped and replied, "My name is Roberts."



The bishop relates that some discussion then followed; that he replied that he had no authority to answer as to the demands made; that the conference was not in session, and would not meet again until the following day. The spokesman of the company then reiterated the demands for an answer, and the party withdrew to a distance away from the church. The bishop continues:

I then re-announced my text, preached and performed the ordination service, and dismissed the congregation. When the audience had retired the ministers and a few laymen had an informal conference. . . . The matter had been sprung upon them so very suddenly they knew not how very generally the public sympathized with the mob, or what might be the effect of an answer upon the laity of the church, some of whom were men of families, and could not be forced away without great suffering. They finally concluded to say this much: "We will consult our quarterly conference on the subject, and, until we can do so, we will refrain from preaching here." Two of this number were requested to go out and make this statement to them. They did so, and though the answer was not "categorical," yet, after some debate among themselves, they dispersed. Monday morning the conference met pursuant to adjournment, deliberately finished up its business, enjoyed together a season of devotion, the appointments were read, and the final adjournment had.

Reference is then made to two subsequent mass-meetings of the citizens at Bonham—one on Monday and the other on Saturday following the conference at Timber Creek, and the bishop concludes his article as follows:

The question has been repeatedly asked: Had the Methodist Episcopal church, South, any agency in getting up this movement? In my judgment leading members of that church were the principal instigators. A local minister of that church was present and actively concerned in the proceedings of the meeting on Saturday. The leader and spokesman of the mob on Sunday said in his speech, "We are of the church, South," by which I understood him to mean, at least, that he was a member

of that church. In the meeting on Monday another local minister of that church was present and made a speech. I do not think that all the members of that church were parties to the outrage, or sympathized with those concerned in it. The preacher in charge of the Bonham church, South, met me at Sherman, treated me with fraternal courtesy, invited me to his house, attended most of the sessions of the conference, partook of the sacrament with us on Sunday morning, and was seated by me when the mob interrupted our worship. I am unwilling to believe him guilty of such duplicity as would allow him to be secretly concerned in the transaction of the mob. Neither do I think the church, South, in general, should be held responsible for this wanton violation of law and the most inalienable rights of men, only so far as they endorse them.

To the foregoing account, and to several newspaper articles which had appeared in the North on the subject of the Timber Creek incident, Judge Samuel A. Roberts replied in a lengthy article in the *St. Louis Christian Advocate* of September 8, 1859, from which the following is taken:

Some time in March, 1859, I first heard that the M. E. Church, North, were to hold a conference at a small school house, about three miles from Bonham, on Timber Creek. . . . I gave the matter no second thought, and probably never should, but for an occurrence which took place in Bonham on Saturday of the Conference week. As I was going from my residence to my office, about the middle of the afternoon of that day, I heard the town bell ringing for so long a period that I knew something unusual had happened. On reaching the public square I observed a great many persons going to the court house. I went into my office to transact some business, when several gentlemen of my acquaintance stepped in after me and informed me that the whole town had been thrown into the most intense state of excitement by the public declaration, in the presence of many gentlemen, of a man who had declared himself to be a preacher of the M. E. Church, North, that he and his church heartily endorsed the sentiments of some of the Northern Conferences,

(Maine, I think), which had been read to him by a gentleman present, to the effect that they regarded slavery as a great evil, and that it was the duty of every one, especially the preachers of that church, fearlessly to teach and preach that doctrine, and to do all in their power to extirpate it. This was certainly sufficiently alarming to put every one on the alert, and to call instantly for investigation. On looking around, I found that at least nine-tenths of the people of our town, and those of the country on a visit—of whom there was a considerable number, it being Saturday—were present. The mayor presided and explained the object of the meeting. I then asked that some one, who heard the remarks of the preacher alluded to, would arise and make an accurate statement of what he did say. This request was responded to by a gentleman present, and corroborated by many who heard the conversation on the streets, and contradicted by no one. The preacher alluded to came in about this time and took his seat and heard all that was said. I will not attempt to give even a synopsis of the speeches that were then made.

We are then told that numerous resolutions were offered; that a committee was appointed to pass upon and report resolutions; that “in the course of a few hours” the committee made their report, and resolutions were adopted, and that a committee was appointed to present these resolutions to the Methodist Conference. The writer continues:

And here is the birth of the “mob,” whose acts have exercised so many pens and caused such an uplifting of hands by many who know nothing about it. The Committee was appointed, our best citizens were placed on it—all noted for their integrity and moderation. The number I never exactly knew. The committee met the next morning about nine o’clock in the public square. It was determined that we should proceed as we were—some on horseback, but most in carriages—to the place of holding the convention; that in the event we found them at worship, we would not interrupt them, but wait until they had concluded, and then I alone should act as the mouth-

piece of the committee. It is my belief that not a single man was armed who went on the committee. I was not, I saw none who were, and I feel confident no one armed for the express purpose; but every one knows that on a frontier country like this, arms were frequently worn, and there might have been a few on the ground in their every-day garb. The committee certainly had no fear. They intended to deport themselves quietly and peaceably, and, of course, had no apprehension of violence from the handful of—well—martyrs on “Timber.” They, therefore, had no use for arms. Well, accoutered as we were, we approached the meeting house riding and driving without the least pretense to order. . . . There was nothing bearing the least appearance of “platoons,” or “regular” file or officers in command, or order, even . . . Arriving at the meeting house the congregation were singing the first hymn. As had been agreed we retired to a little distance to wait until the sermon was over. We had not been long in this situation until we were informed that the conference, having heard of our meeting in town, and of the resolutions passed, had concluded all of their business the night previous, and had resolved to disperse as soon as the Bishop had finished his sermon, and thus balk us in our design. That, if true, and we had no means then of determining, would have left us, as was designed, in an awkward predicament; and it was at once determined that we should go into the house, and, at the conclusion of the last hymn, discharge our office. We did so. I walked foremost. The hymn was about half through. Not a word was said. No disorder, not even the singing interrupted for a moment. I took my position in front of the Bishop, and as the church was crowded, remained standing. The Bishop himself handed me a chair, (strange courtesy to the leader of a “mob”). At the conclusion of the hymn I said, “Do I address Bishop Janes?” He answered the first inquiry, and did not wait for the second, as he asserts, but answered promptly the first inquiry, “I am the Bishop.” I then said that I had a “disagreeable, even a painful, task to perform,” stating briefly the cause which led to a meeting of the citizens of Fannin, the resolutions adopted by them—which were read by Mr. Delisle to the Bishop—and demanded a “categorical” answer to our resolutions requiring the ministers of his church henceforth to cease their ministerial functions in our

county. I said, "We are here now in peace; it will depend upon your action whether we shall have to come again in a different attitude." I begged him not to allow himself to be cheated into the belief that this was the movement of a few idle and dissolute malcontents, but assured him that the wealth, the talent, and the best elements of our society were in it, with a unanimity unprecedented. I also alluded to the immediate cause of the meeting, viz: the declaration of one of their preachers on our streets the day previous, particularly mentioned before, and concluded by alluding to what has always been inexplicable to me, but upon one hypothesis. The Northern and the Southern Methodist churches differ in nothing except on the slavery question. We know the position of the Northern church on the subject. No one living at the South need adhere to the Northern branch, then, upon conscientious scruples, save on the one point alone, there being no difference. He must be conscientiously opposed to the institution of slavery, or an imbecile, to persist in his adherence to the North while living at the South. He must mean to teach the "eradication," or, in other words, the abolition, of slavery, and, therefore, a church claiming such privileges could not, and would not, be tolerated among us; that we were not disposed to sit quietly by until they had located themselves firmly in our midst, when it would be too late to help ourselves; that we thought we knew our rights, and intended to maintain them, etc., etc., and closed by saying that we could have no discussion, and expected a categorical answer in two hours time. . . . He then observed in substance that he was taken by surprise; that he had no suspicion that the conference would not be well received here; that four years ago (I think) a similar conference had been held on the same spot, and that no objection had ever been heard to its sessions; that he had no authority to answer our demands, and was going on with further objections when I interrupted him, and said that we understood his position; more had already been said than was intended, and that we could no longer parley, but would expect their answer at the stated period. I was in the act of going when the Bishop again addressed me and asked if he would be "permitted" to go on with the service of the hour. I replied that we came not for the purpose of interrupting them at worship, and that they were at liberty, as far as we were



concerned, to consume the two hours as they pleased—in worship or in deliberation—and left the room.

The Judge then argues at some length the question of “constitutional privileges,” in answer to Bishop Janes’s reference to that subject, and replies to the Bishop’s use of the term “mob,” and in reply to the Bishop’s expressed opinion that the movement was instigated chiefly by members of the Church, South, Judge Roberts says:

The accidental circumstance that two or three members of the committee were of that church would no more prove it a Methodist church movement than the presence of Baptists or Presbyterians would prove it a Baptist or Presbyterian movement, for there were fully as many members of the two latter churches as of the former on the committee. It was the movement of no church, of no party, but the unpremeditated uprising of the people for the protection of their rights, their firesides and their homes.

The “Texas Mob,” as one can readily believe, became a subject of endless comment in the Church press, particularly in the North, the most of it of scorching denunciation; while the few references to it in the Southern Church papers were either mildly deprecatory or openly defensive. A single extract from each “side” will suffice. Says Dr. Elliott, editor of the *Central Christian Advocate*: “In none but slave states is it necessary to resort to violence, rob the mail, interfere with assemblies worshipping God, etc., in order to guard securely their institutions. But freedom of speech, of the press, or of worship cannot exist alongside of slavery. Everything inconsistent with the interests of slaveholders must be suppressed at once and at any cost. The Church itself is a chattel, and its ministers must be dumb unless they choose to speak as their masters dictate.” Says the *Texas Christian Advocate*: “We hope the meeting will

insure the end designed, in a manner at once thorough and immediate. *Thorough*, because, however fondly the Northern Church may cherish the delusion that it is her mission to *extirpate* slavery in the South, there can be nothing better for her and for us than that she should, if possible, be at once radically cured of this benevolent folly; *immediate* because it is evident that the citizens of Fannin County, and all other Southern people similarly beset and outraged by this pestilent overplus of Northern ingenuity or fanaticism, do not desire to be troubled with taking measures to rid themselves of it further than to give a plain intimation that its absence is desirable. This should be enough, and we hope the Northern *missionaries* will not force any additional action upon the Southern people. . . . They should not stand upon the order of their going, but go at once. Let them shake off the dust of their feet if they choose, and consign us to any fate which their nutmeg genius may deem pungent enough for our iniquities."

The Northern Methodists did not withdraw their preachers from Texas, as demanded by the "committee" at Timber Creek, but at least two ministers of that Church continued to reside in the state, and to some extent exercise their ministerial office. It came to be charged that the Church authorities had evaded the issue, and that they had intended to do so, and that it was their purpose to continue to introduce "abolitionism" into slave territory behind the screen of public worship. Public feeling came to be more and more excited, and excitable, as the public press reported a continued succession of incidents, speeches and resolutions occurring throughout the country. In 1860 rumors were rife in Texas of the presence of secret abolition plots and incendiarism. The Texas State Legislature enacted a law practically legalizing mob measures for putting down or punishing acts or words inciting to incendiarism or abolitionism.

The Rev. Anthony Bewley resided in Johnson County,

below Fort Worth, from 1858 to about February, 1860. At the conference of which he was a member, held in Franklin County, Arkansas, in the spring of 1860, Bewley was consulted by Bishop Ames as to the situation in Texas, and as to his willingness to return. Bewley replied that it was not likely that he could do any good, and gave his reasons, but said that "there were large German settlements on the Nueces, west of the Colorado, who wanted our preaching." After some discussion of the matter Bewley and Willett were appointed to the Nueces field, with missionary appropriations for the support of their families, Bewley being appointed superintendent of the mission. After spending some time visiting in Missouri, Bewley returned to Texas, bringing his family and some other relatives with him. Whether he reached the exact field of labor assigned him we are not informed, but his stay in Texas was cut short this time by an untoward incident which put a sure-enough mob upon his track. A letter addressed to Bewley, and supposedly committed to a private messenger to be delivered, came to light early in September, 1860, the contents of which will explain some subsequent events. The letter was as follows:

Denton Creek, July 3, 1860

Dear Sir,—A painful abscess in my right thumb is my apology for not writing to you from Anderson. Our glorious cause is prospering finely as far south as Brenham. There I parted with brother Wampler; he went still further south; he will do good wherever he goes. I travelled up through the frontier counties—a part of the time under a fictitious name. I found many friends who had been initiated, and understood the mystic red. I met a number of our friends near Georgetown. We had a consultation, and were unanimously of the opinion that we should be cautious of our new associates; most of them are desperate characters, and may betray us, as there are some slaveholders among them, and they value the poor negro much higher than horses. The only good they will do us will be

destroying towns, mills, etc., which is our only hope in Texas at present. If we can break Southern merchants and millers, and have their places filled by honest Republicans, Texas will be all easy prey, if we only do our duty. All wanted for the time being is control of trade. Trade, assisted by preaching and teaching, will soon control public opinion. Public opinion is mighty and will prevail. Lincoln will certainly be elected; we will then have the Indian nation, cost what it will. Squatter sovereignty will prevail there as it has in Kansas. That accomplished we have at least one more step to take, but one more struggle to make; that is, free Texas. We will then have a connected link from the Lakes to the Gulf. Slavery will then be surrounded, by land and by water, and will soon sting itself to death. I repeat, Texas we must have, and our only chance is to break up the present inhabitants, in whatever way we can and it must be done. Some of us will most assuredly suffer in accomplishing our object, but our Heavenly Father will reward us in assisting him in blotting out the greatest curse on earth. It would be impossible for us to do an act that is as blasphemous in the sight of God as holding slaves. We must have frequent consultations with our colored friends. (Let our meetings be in the night.) Impress upon their clouded intellects the blessings of freedom; induce all to leave you can. Our arrangements for their accommodation to go North are better than they have been, but not as good as I would like.

We need more agents, both local and travelling. I will send out travelling agents when I get home. We must appoint a local agent in every neighborhood in your district. I will recommend a few I know it will do to rely upon; namely, brothers Leake, Wood, Evans, Mr. Daniel Viery, Cole, Nugent, Shaw, White, Gilford, Ashley, Drake Meek Shultz and Newman. Brother Leake the bearer of this, will take a circuitous route, and see as many of our colored friends as he can; he also recommends a different material to be used about town, etc. Our friends sent a very inferior article—they emit too much smoke, and do not contain enough camphene. They are calculated to get some of our friends hurt. I will send a supply when I get home.

I will have to reprove you and your co-workers for your negligence in sending funds for our agents. But few have been



compensated for their trouble. Our faithful correspondent, brother Webber, has received but a trifle—not so much as apprentice's wages; neither have brother Willett, Mangum and others. You must call upon our colored friends for more money. They must not expect us to do all; they certainly will give every cent if they knew how soon their shackles will be broken. My hand is very painful, and I close.

Yours truly,

W. H. BAILEY.

The author of "Methodism in the Southwest" treats this letter as a forgery, and calls it a stratagem to lead to Bewley's undoing and says that the existence of such a person as W. H. Bailey was doubtful; but the letter was everywhere accepted in Texas and elsewhere as genuine. It was widely published, appearing even in New Orleans and St. Louis papers. The New Orleans *Delta*, under the head of "The John Brownites in Texas," says: "The following well-authenticated and clearly proved document has been sent to us from Texas, by a gentleman of this city, who assures us that there cannot be a particle of doubt as to its genuineness. It is a startling and fiendish document, which is quite worthy of the perusal of those credulous, easy-going citizens who have no anxieties about the South—no fear of any real design to interfere with our institutions by Northern emissaries." The same paper copies an item from the Fort Smith *Herald* that "Rev. W. H. Bailey was caught, and arrived in Fort Smith on Sunday last, in the overland stage, under the charge of Mr. Johnson, an officer from Texas. Bailey is one of the disciples of the John Brown school, and has been engaged in burning, stealing, etc., in a sister State; and a reward of three thousand dollars has been offered for his delivery in Fort Worth." Aside from this item the fate of Bailey is not known.

A copy of the Bailey letter was sent to the St. Louis *Christian Advocate* by "Rev. J. R. Burk," of Henderson,



Texas, who writes: "Brother J. R. Bellamy (then presiding elder of the Dallas district) furnished me with the enclosed document, which he has read in manuscript. . . . I think there is no fiction in the letter to run Bewley from Texas, as a few days before it was found, this town of Henderson was burned, over one hundred miles from the place where it was found; and the man in that letter, as the Corresponding Secretary of this State, was taken at Henderson, acknowledged himself to be acting in that capacity, and was hanged. Many others have shared the same fate, both black and white, and others will soon go the same way."

It appears that Bewley and his family had quit their Texas home before the Bailey letter had come to light, and when the excitement arose, growing out of the finding of the letter, it was reported that Bewley had fled to Kansas or Missouri. A reward of \$500 was offered for him by a Fort Worth "Committee," and other rewards were offered, the whole amounting to \$1000.

To make a long and unpleasant story short, Bewley was pursued by officers and others from Texas, found and arrested near Springfield, Mo., and the company with their prisoner started back to Texas. At Fayetteville, Ark., during a delay, Bewley was permitted to forward a letter to his wife, in which he says: "After I left there that day, I was hurried on, and the next day, about nine o'clock, we got to Fayetteville. . . . They are now after Tom Willet. So soon as they succeed in getting him, I suppose they will set out with us to Texas in the overland stage, and if so, hand us over to the Fort Worth Committee, and receive the reward. Then we will, I suppose, be under their supervision, to do with us as seemeth them good. And if that takes place, dear and beloved wife and loving children, I shall never in this life expect to see you, but I shall look to meet you all, with our little babe that has already gone to that blessed heaven of repose. The reason why I so speak, in these times of

heated excitement, mole-hills are raised mountain-high, and where there are none it is frequently imagined they see something. That being the case, it seems it is enough to know that we are 'North Methodists,' as they are called, and from what we learned in Texas about the Fort Worth Committee, they had sworn vengeance against all such folks. . . . But, dear wife and children, you know that all these things are false. You have been with me, and you know as well as I do that none of these things have never been countenanced about our house, but that we have repudiated such to the last. So you see that I am innocent, and you, my love, will have the lasting satisfaction to know that your husband was innocent, for you have been with me for some twenty-six years, and your constitution is emaciated and gone down to feebleness. You will have to spend the remainder of your life as a bereaved widow, with your orphan children, with one blind daughter. . . . As I was taken away and not even permitted to see you, that I might bid you and the children farewell, I have to do it this way. . . . I feel no guilt, from the fact that I have done nothing to cause the feeling . . . I with a portion of the vigilance committee will leave Fayetteville to-night sometime. The committee has returned without Willet, and have given up hunting him any more. . . . I can only leave you in the hands of Him in whom I put my trust."

The events which follow have been somewhat variously reported. According to Elliott's "History," "When the mob had reached Fort Worth, Texas, with Mr. Bewley, they put him in charge of a hotel-keeper. He was much fatigued and was suffered to retire early. . . . A little slave showed him to his room up stairs. . . . About eleven o'clock he was taken from his bed by three men, and when they reached the street they were joined by a crowd there assembled. They took him a few hundred yards away . . . and suspended him upon the same limb and tree upon which several negroes and

a Northern man named Crawford had been hung. This gallows had been called 'the Crawford limb'; after that, however, the people called it 'the Bewley limb.' " Another report has it that Bewley was "tried and convicted by a jury of three hundred men." The St. Louis *Christian Advocate* published the following, which it said was "from a reliable source": "Mr. Bewley was carried to Fort Worth, after his arrest by the men from Arkansas, and there, at or near Fort Worth, he was tried by the civil authorities, and required to give bail to appear for trial before a higher court. This he could not or did not do, and was ordered to prison. On the way to prison a mob overpowered the sheriff and his posse, took Bewley and hung him. Our informant did not *see* these things, but heard them in Texas, from what he regarded as reliable authority, and believed them to be true. The evidence on which Bewley was sent on for further trial, consisted partly in what sundry persons testified they had heard him say, and partly in statements made by others who had been arrested and punished. These statements implicated him as one of the party organized to carry out the purposes expressed in the Bailey letter; but the evidence consisted mainly in the fact that the original Bailey letter was produced at the trial, and Bewley acknowledged he had received and subsequently lost it."

With the passing of Bewley ended the activities of the "Northern Methodists" in Texas before the War. But portions of Texas continued to be alarmed by abolitionist's plots. Reports of incendiarism were numerous, and "hangings" were frequent. Some accounts of more trouble in North Texas will be noticed in the chapter covering the War period.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE YEARS 1860-1866

WE propose in this concluding chapter to carry our history through the War period, embracing also the great reconstructive General Conference of 1866 and the sessions of our annual conferences of the same year, including the organization of a new conference in Texas and the projection of another. There is history enough in this period to make a volume all by itself, but the essentials of the material which we have been able to gather may be contained in a single chapter, though it may prove to be the longest in the book.

The year 1860 found both the State and the Church in a prosperous and growing condition. Texas had 604,251 people, by the Federal census, an increase of 391,623 during the previous decade, or 184.2 per cent. The increase during the war decade, or from 1860 to 1870, dropped to 35 per cent. Of the population in 1860, 136,853 were negro slaves, who had been "rendered for taxation" the previous year at a total valuation of \$85,630,748, average value "per head" of \$625.54<sup>1</sup>. The slave wealth of the state overtopped that from any other source, even exceeding the value of land rendered for taxation, and being two and one-half times the value of all the horses and cattle put together. These figures are of interest as pointing to the sacrifice of wealth which the war was to entail upon Texas alone. And it is little wonder that, with so much property at stake, short work

<sup>1</sup> Figures from Texas Almanac, 1860.

was made of all "abolition" crusades, whether political or ecclesiastical.

The annual conferences met in the fall of 1860 under conditions of great excitement growing out of the national presidential campaign. It was generally felt that if Lincoln should be elected it would be a portent of national division and war; and the announcement of his election, which traveled incredibly fast for those days, reached Texas in the midst of the conference season. Bishop Andrew, now growing quite venerable, though not by any means feeble, was in charge of all the Texas conferences.

The East Texas Conference was held at Jefferson, October 24-30. There were reported 89 traveling preachers, 241 local preachers, and 15,881 members. Maddison Thompson, John C. Smith, John Stubblefield, William Allen, William F. Cummins, John H. McLean, Cadwell W. Raines and David Austin were admitted on trial. Robert M. Leaton was received by transfer. Hugh B. Hamilton and M. C. Robertson had died during the year, an obituary of the former appearing in a previous chapter.

The Texas Conference was held at Chappell Hill, November 14-21. Traveling preachers, 124; local preachers, 190; members, 12,922. James W. Baldrige, Nicholas H. Boring, Jackson Perry, J. Frederick Cox, Thomas M. Glass, Charles Biel, William Harms, Love M. Harris, Archibald McKinney, Archibald B. Duval, Eugene R. Smith and Ira E. Chalk were admitted on trial. William A. Parks, Thomas W. Rogers, William Shegog and Jacob S. Matthews were received by transfer. John Haynie and Henry D. Hubert had died during the year, further mention of whom will be made.

The Rio Grande Conference met in San Antonio on November 29, reporting 31 traveling preachers, 30 local preachers and 1858 members. Roswell Gillett, Warren O. Shely, Thomas F. Cocke, Robert H. Mangham, Theodore



M. Price, and James T. Gillett were admitted on trial. Alexander A. Smithwick had died during the year, the minutes stating "No memoir."

The total statistics for the Church in Texas in this year before the war show 244 traveling preachers, 461 local preachers, and 30,661 members. The General Minutes, our only source of detailed information, make no report of number of churches or value of church property. Turning to the Federal Census reports for 1860 we find that the Methodists are credited with 410 church buildings in Texas, valued at \$319,934; the Baptists had 210 church buildings, value \$228,030; Presbyterians, 72 churches, valued at \$120,550; Christians, 53 buildings, value, \$27,395; Cumberland Presbyterians, 52 houses, value, \$47,430; Roman Catholic, 33 churches, value, \$189,900; Episcopalians had 19 churches and Lutherans 19. A copy of the Texas Conference Minutes for 1860 report "Value of Buildings" for churches and parsonages, but the number of these is not shown. From the valuation figures of these for the various charges we can at least learn what charges had one or more churches or parsonages. Fifty-five charges show church buildings, and eleven had parsonages, or parsonage lots. The churches range in value from \$400 to \$10,000, the charges showing the largest valuations being the following: Galveston, Houston, Huntsville, Brazoria, Richmond, Montgomery, Anderson, Washington, Chappell Hill, Waxahachie, Waco, Belton, Austin, and San Marcos.

At the risk of its being monotonous we shall dispose of all the war conference sessions at once. The East Texas Conference was held at Marshall, October 23-28, 1861, Bishop Early in charge. Daniel T. Lake, Wiley A. Shook and James M. Sutton were admitted on trial; Nathan S. Johnston had died during the year.

The Texas Conference was held at Huntsville, November 6-12, 1861, Bishop Early presiding. Joseph Hines, George W. Graves, Robert D. Allen, Cyrus M.

Carpenter, and James B. Shapard were admitted on trial. James C. Wilson and Geo. W. Burrows had died during the year.

The Rio Grande Conference was held at Corpus Christi, November 20-25, 1861, John W. DeVilbiss president. No one admitted; no transfers and no deaths.

For the years 1862-63-64 and '65 no minutes of the East Texas Conference were published in the General Minutes, the editor simply entering "No Minutes received," and there are no records extant for these conferences except a few brief references from private sources. The Rio Grande Conference was held at Goliad in 1862, J. W. DeVilbiss president. Two German preachers, J. Gleiss and Conrad Pluncke, were admitted on trial. The Texas Conference was held at San Marcos, Asbury Davidson president. Granbury S. Sandle admitted on trial. Byron S. Carden had died. The Rio Grande Conference for 1863 was held at Sutherland Springs, R. H. Belvin, president. Ferdinand Mummee admitted on trial. William J. Joyce received by transfer from the East Texas Conference. Jasper K. Harper had died during the year. The Texas Conference was held at Columbus in 1863, R. Alexander president. B. Ahrens, George V. Ridley, D. B. Wright and J. B. Allen admitted on trial. Robert N. Drake had died during the year.

The Rio Grande Conference was held at Helena in 1864, Jesse Boring president. The Texas Conference met in Waco, no entry as to who presided. L. H. Baldwin and J. P. Mussett admitted on trial. William A. Shegog had died. In 1865 the Rio Grande Conference met at San Antonio, J. W. DeVilbiss president. Robert Blassengame admitted on trial. The Texas Conference was held at Chappell Hill, with Bishop Andrew back in the chair. George Whitaker and Edwin Duvall admitted on trial. J. W. Kenney and D. Carl had died during the year. Thos. Stanford, Jno. S. McCarver and Wm.

M. Mathis transferred from the Arkansas Conference.

To go back over this period now and take note of some personal matters. First a few scattered reports gleaned from the *Texas Christian Advocate*, 1860-61. There are no files of the *Advocate* for the years 1862-68, a period during which a file of these papers would prove invaluable now, but one must know that the *Advocate* suspended publication during a part of the war.<sup>2</sup> A report from W. T. Melugin, Dallas, in July, 1860, gives an account of a great meeting on his circuit: 38 joined the church at Dallas; 13 additions at "Harding," 26 at "Cottonwood." From Stephenville T. B. Ferguson writes that Indians are stealing horses; that he and a companion had scared off an attacking party of Indians with sticks flourished as guns; hard to do anything religiously on account of disturbed state of public mind. From Comanche the same preacher writes later that a meeting at Comanche had resulted in 14 additions to the church. J. M. Marshall writes from McKinney in October, reporting that 120 had joined the church during the year. Six Sabbath schools on the work, 240 scholars. "We have established a literary and theological society," he writes, "for improvement of local preachers and exhorters." From Buchanan circuit, scattered over Johnson, Ellis and Parker counties, Thomas W. Rogers reports that the class books show 400 members, and that two houses of worship had been built during the year. From a "Flying Trip to North Texas" John W. Fields gives an account of a visit to McKenzie College, July 25, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> The *Advocate* resumed publication as a half-sheet, at Houston in 1864, as Galveston was in the hands of the Federals—J. E. Carnes, editor. In 1865, after the suspension of hostilities, the paper was returned to Galveston, H. B. Phillpot editor. Carnes had left our Church, gone to the Swedenborgians, and later became editor of the *Galveston News*. I. G. John was elected editor of the *Advocate* at the General Conference of 1866, but he "edited the *Advocate* for pleasure and preached for a living." In the fall of 1866 a young printer, L. Blaylock by name, entered the *Advocate* service, and after a few years he proved to be the man to put this struggling paper on its feet.

"Only about 50 out of 150 pupils left to witness the close," he writes. Many had gone to war.<sup>3</sup> The country had an abundant wheat harvest; all barns full, enough to feed the Confederate army for one year; prices 40 to 50 cents, and the only markets at Jefferson and Shreveport, after a wagon haul of 90 to 150 miles.

Several new schools begin to sprout up just at the opening of the war, only to be nipped soon thereafter. "Rutersville Female College" was an unsuccessful effort by H. S. Thrall to rehabilitate the old Rutersville institution. "Port Sullivan Female Institute" is mentioned for a few years, first under "Prof. Carmer and Lady," and then run by our old friend, Joseph P. Sneed. But one of the saddest chapters in our educational history was the decline of Soule University, the leading institution of our Church for a few brief years. A Medical Department had been provided for, to be located in Galveston, but this did not come into existence until 1865, when Dr. Jesse Boring and his son, Dr. Nicholas Boring, were appointed professors in the Medical Department. This department began operations, but soon thereafter Dr. Boring, Junior, was killed in a railroad accident, and the elder Dr. Boring returned to Georgia. The Medical Department became detached from the institution at Chappell Hill, and set up a separate existence. In January, 1860, George W. Carter, D.D., from Virginia, was elected president of Soule University. An advance movement was planned. The curriculum was expanded. Chairs of English Literature and Metaphysics were added, also departments of Biblical Literature and Law. The Department of Biblical Literature embraced "the Hebrew Language, systematic theology, ecclesiastical history, Church polity, homiletics, and hermeneutics."

<sup>3</sup> McKenzie College graduated no classes from 1862 to 1869. It closed in 1871, by reason of age and infirmities of the president. During its history it had more than 3300 students enrolled, and of these 2250 were converted in its halls. And all this fruitful and honorable record was made without one dollar from the Church.



Plans were carefully laid, we are told, to avoid a repetition of the blunders which had brought disaster in so many educational ventures before. "Besides this," says Dr. C. C. Cody, "Soule University was enthusiastically sustained by many of the most influential and wealthiest citizens of the State. Abundant means necessary for material progress seemed in easy reach. The reports of the trustees and the forecasts of the university at this period were luminous with bright prospects and coming greatness." But, alas, from the same educational authority we learn:

In spite of an outlook so full of promise, scarcely had Dr. Carter entered fully into the discharge of his official duties before the call to war was sounded and the young men of the South were challenged to arms. In vain the conservative ones advised against the young men leaving the colleges, and President Davis protested in vain against such an expensive policy, declaring that "we are grinding up our seed corn by sending college boys to war."

Dr. Carter, instead of following this wise course, secured a colonel's commission and urged his students to enlist and follow him to the front. Having resigned as head of the institution, Dr. Follansbee, who had filled the Chair of Languages from the organization of the faculty, assumed the duties of President. But the war spirit was abroad, and, in spite of his best endeavors, after a few months the halls of the university were deserted and silent. A few months later, under the urgent demands of the Confederate government, the building was converted into a military hospital. At the close of the war it was left with bare and defaced walls, its equipment gone, its endowment swept away, and with neglected liabilities that had increased to seventeen thousand dollars.

Extracts from two letters, written by a member of the faculty of Soule University, will furnish first-hand confirmation of the change in the fortunes of the institution. The first was written on March 25, 1860, portraying conditions in glowing colors:



The Lord has lately blessed us with a gracious revival of his work in our colleges [Soule University and Chappell Hill Female College]. We trust the fruits will be seen many days hence. The schools are also prospering otherwise. We are crowded in the University with students. Dr. Carter of Mississippi [Cody says Virginia] has accepted the presidency and will be on here in May to organize the faculty anew. Bro. Foot resigned last winter, purposing to withdraw in June next. Bro. Kirby resigned about two weeks ago & withdrew immediately without ceremony. The place is now temporarily filled by Bro. Matthews. We anticipate largely when the new order of arrangements shall have transpired.

The second letter was dated March 26, 1861, one year later, and reveals the fact that anticipations had not been realized. Says the writer:

The crises, secession, the prospect of war, and the current famine of our land of Texas have produced their effects. Hence I arose from a sick room to realize circumstances of straitened character to such an extent as to amount to actual suffering. The want of all material aid from College, the scarcity of money & provisions and a general destruction of all commerical faith shut up supplies to cash transactions. Add to all this, a general neglect and a bad management of University affairs, and you may readily imagine me in no plight to give you any good news, or a good account of matters & things, while an unwillingness to speak evil, led me to delay a reply. . . . It is true there are a goodly number of students here. But too many are beneficiaries, or have failed in payment of tuition fees to enable teachers to live. Besides, I think, the proceeds of too many scholarships have found their way either into the stone walls, or attendant expenses. . . . I look upon the Institution as in the woods at least for the present. What the future will present, it is impossible to tell. The darkest hour, it is said, is just before day. That may be the case with our College.

Unfortunately this was not the case with Soule University, but the darkness increased, as we have seen.

Efforts were made to revive the institution after the war, but an epidemic of yellow fever which was especially severe about Chappell Hill and in the colleges there, brought on another period of depression and decline. Dr. Francis Asbury Mood, of South Carolina, was at length called to the presidency. He came, but only to witness the ultimate demise of Soule University. His subsequent labors for education in Texas belong to a period not included in this volume.

Naturally one would suppose that the political agitation preceding the war, and then the actual outbreak of war, had a demoralizing effect upon all church work, and that a greater laxness in the moral life of the people should result. And such was the case. Moreover, there seems to have been a general complaint of "hard times." Several letters of the preachers, which we have, dated early in the war period, reflect these conditions. From one we learn that the class-meeting was being sadly neglected in some places. H. S. Thrall, presiding elder of the Columbus district in 1860-61, who at the same time resided at Ruttersville and endeavored to carry on a young ladies' boarding school at old Ruttersville College, writes under date of April 25, 1861:

Our prospects on the Columbus district are not very flattering. The hard times preclude the practicability of doing anything in the way of church building, and I fear there will be a great falling off in all our Collections this year. The unsettled state of the country is unfavorable to the revival spirit. Still the most of the preachers are at their post and doing their duty, as well as circumstances permit. . . . Our boarding school, notwithstanding some opposition, is doing remarkably well. When I left home we had thirty young ladies in our family, and were expecting another last Monday. Still, hard times, opposition, and some uncertainty as to retaining our teachers, may cause a falling off next session, and may possibly end in a change of location.

At least one preacher proposes to *declare war* on moral conditions in his charge—this W. A. Parks, at LaGrange. He writes early in 1861:

I am still visiting, praying and preaching hard as I can, and with fear and trembling. As yet we see no change in the moral condition of the town. The people are so absorbed in the "Crisis" that it seems that many have forgotten that they have souls. I think that the moral crisis in this country is much greater than the political. Perhaps there is a change but it is for the worse. The apathy of the church and the carelessness of sinners cause me much anxiety and solicitude. And then it seems that the people in this country have the dancing mania. I expect about next Sunday I will tare open a hornet's nest, as I intend to preach a set sermon against dancing. I intend to do my *duty* and the people can think and say as they please about it. . . . I expect you will hear of me geting into a difficulty for I intend to throw a few Bum shells right into my congregation. I think this will be for the best in the end.

The presiding elder of that district reports a little later that war had been made "against Bro. Parks at Lagrange," and that it became necessary to call an investigating committee, which, after full investigation, "unanimously acquitted Bro. Parks and expressed sympathy with him in his difficulties."

After the secession of Texas and war had actually opened between the North and the South, the belligerent spirit took possession of many of the preachers and carried them off to war. The German preacher, Peter Moelling, writes from Galveston in October, 1861:

Such a moving as there is now a going on here you never have seen in all your life; most every house is emtyed to Houston or Liberty. If Lincoln's fleet should come now, his myrmidons will not find much to steal, and I am satisfied that their blood will make the grass come up a foot higher on our prairie here. If our rifled guns should not come, then we will let them land and fight them whilst they cannot use their big guns against us.

The good Lord have mercy on us and deliver us all. Pray for me, my dear Brother, and if I should never meet you on earth, meet me in heaven. I shall die a true patriot and a soldier of the cross, the gun in hand and Christ within my heart.

From the minutes of the war conferences we note that preachers who went to war were usually appointed as colleague with some other preacher to a charge, and then listed in footnotes as "In the C. S. Army," or "Chaplain in C. S. Army." In the minutes of the Rio Grande and the Texas conferences (no minutes of East Texas Conference published) the following preachers from these conferences are listed at different times as being in the army: F. C. Wilkes, Geo. W. Carter, J. L. Crabb, W. G. Veal, H. M. Burrows, R. Y. King, D. M. Stovall, Wm. C. Collins, Wm. B. Hill, W. J. Joyce, Jno. C. Smith, A. B. Manion, Jesse Boring, Nicholas H. Boring, Hamilton G. Horton, W. R. D. Stockton, Thomas F. Cocke, J. Hines, F. C. Wilkes, H. W. South, F. J. Cox, R. T. P. Allen, H. M. Glass, J. P. Shapard, J. E. Ferguson, Geo. Tittle. The following received appointments as chaplains: O. M. Addison, F. P. Ray, C. H. Brooks, B. F. Perry, P. W. Phillips and W. A. Parks. The doughty Simon Peter Moelling, who was ready to fertilize Galveston island with Yankee blood, did not enlist, but moved safely to Houston, and later to the interior, and survived the war. S. C. Littlepage says in his "Reminiscences": "When the war broke out I joined Major Farrow's company, and went with it with Parson's regiment of State troops. Drilled with them by day and preached to them at night. When an effort by arbitration was made, thinking hostilities about over, I took another appointment. Stationed at LaGrange in 1861; at close of year went to Fairfield circuit. In 1863 I was appointed missionary to Forney's division of the Confederate army. Joined this command at Camden, Ark., and remained until the war closed. During the

connection with the army I organized four army churches, one in each brigade of the division."

We have the written journal of Oscar M. Addison, covering the period of his service as chaplain of Col. Bates's regiment. This contains but little of general interest, except to the antiquary. Addison at first accepted an offer of a captaincy of a company of "Lancers" which he was to raise for Col. Carter's regiment at Chappell Hill, but after some effort "I found a reaction among the people," he says, "and but few were disposed to enlist. There were many recruiting officers in the field, calling for 12 months men, who met with but little success. This being the case men for the war (these I desired) could scarcely be obtained on any terms, and feeling disgusted with the apathy of the people, I gave up the business and returned home." Finding that his appointment in the conference had been filled, he visited Col. Allen's camp at Austin, with the view of applying for a chaplaincy, but "finding some 8 or 10 preachers in the camp," he proceeded to Velasco, where Bates's regiment was encamped, and received appointment as chaplain of that regiment. A few abbreviated extracts may be taken from his journal:

Aug. 4, 1862: I have made some few acquaintances among the officers and men, a very small per centum of whom I find to be church members. Wishing to have prayer meeting I had Liet. Herndon to send for all his religious men to come to his tent. Out of the 10 or doz. who came I found but one who would consent to pray in meeting.

Oct. 11th: From the best information to be obtained Galveston was taken possession of by the enemy on Wednesday afternoon, our troops marching out in the morning. Our boarding house was overrun this morning before breakfast with a large number of planters and merchants from the upper portion of the country, on a self-appointed mission to our Col. to obtain permission to place obstructions in the river to prevent the ascent of Yankee gunboats. They offer 1000 negroes for the



purpose. Previously a negro could not be hired by the QrMaster only at the highest rates, and the apathy of the wealthy citizens of this country has been the subject of frequent remark by our soldiers. Their selfishness has exceeded their patriotism, and though they shouted loud and long for secession, they have done nothing since. A general spirit of rejoicing pervades the camp that the proximity of the foe has had the effect of alarming our long-at-ease patriots, and given them at last, even though forced to it, to feel some interest in the fate of the country.

Nov. 12: Yesterday we buried Farmer, a private in Hamilton's company. His sickness was severe and quite brief. On my first visit he seemed much excited and asked my opinion of his case. I feared to tell him, for I thought him dangerous, but asked him of his spiritual condition. He told me he thought he was a converted man though he had never joined the church. I prayed for him and by his request for his family. He soon gave evidence of a change for the better & we all hoped was getting well but inflammation of the stomach soon took place, this added to congestive fever, his original complaint, in a few days carried him off. Poor fellow—he seemed quite anxious about his family (a young wife and one child) and in his delirium before his death enjoined on one of his Lieuts. to send his wife 50 bushels of corn. [This is only one of many instances of soldiers dying in camp, with the heart-breaking anxiety of leaving destitute families at home.]

Dec. 8: Set off a week ago for Houston. Reached there on Tuesday night & put up at the Fannin house. Found the city & hotel full. . . . While there Col. Bates invited me to call with him and others on Gen. Magruder, who had but recently arrived. . . . Mother had written to me to get a pair of cotton cards at any price. Meeting while there a good chance to send them home I hunted them up. Found them at a place where they would not sell, though a gentleman told me he had bought two pair there that morning at \$25 each. At another place where I found a fresh placard announcing "Cotton Cards and nails" I was informed that the former article had not been brought from the depot, but would be on hand before the departure of the cars, price \$25. They did not come until after the cars had left. Missing the chance to send them, I did not think I would get any, hoping that by the time I could forward them

the price would come down, but on the day I was leaving I concluded to get a pair and trust to chances of sending them home. My man who had promised them to me at \$25 now asked \$30. I told him he had promised me a pair at the former price, but it did no good, and not having time to look elsewhere I bought them. At another place I paid \$5 for what they called ½ lb flax thread, but I think there was not half that amount. The cars advertise to leave H. at 10 o'clock. After waiting more than 2 hours after that time in the cold we finally got under way, and after a tedious run reached Columbia after dark.

May 27, 1863: The peaceful quiet of our soldier life has been disturbed by Bank's raid into Louisiana and our regt. is now en route to that State.

The regiment moved into Louisiana, where most of the year was spent. Under date of June 25 there is a long recital of the successful battle of Brashear City, where 1400 Yankee prisoners were taken, 4000 stands of arms, 11 siege guns, and "an incredible amount of stores of all kind, including flour, bacon, crackers, pork, rice, pickles, beans, dried apples, butter, lard, prepared milk, sugar, coffee, mackerel, cheese, potatoes, desiccated potatoes, and sutlers supplies generally, including clothing of all description." The chaplain of the victorious regiment came off with a number of *books*, some picked up on the battlefield, others of a theological nature from the deserted tent of a Yankee chaplain who had fled, and who, a year or two after, opened up correspondence with a view to their return. But they were retained as the "spoils of war," and are now in the possession of this writer.

An interesting survival of this army life, found among the papers of the chaplain, is a "Covenant of the Christian League of Bate's Regt. 13th Tex Vol C S A," with the following preamble and regulations:

We, the undersigned, members of Bate's Regiment, C. S. Army, and belonging to different branches of the Christian Church, or intending to become so, absent from home and our

usual places of worship, banded together in the defense of our common country, and feeling still desirous of practicing the precepts of Christ our Master, and giving our influence and example in favor of his cause, do hereby solemnly covenant together, and unite for these purposes, under the following regulations:

I. The association shall be known as the Christian League, a religious organization for temporary use while we are connected with the regiment.

II. Our object shall be the cultivation of a spirit of piety among ourselves, and the aiding of others who may be disposed to a religious life.

III. We will regard the chaplain of our Regt as our pastor for the time being, and if for any cause there should cease to be one to officiate, we will in the best manner we can supply his lack of service from among our number.

IV. Business meetings of the League shall be convened by the chaplain at such times as may be necessary, at which we promise attendance when in our power.

V. We pledge ourselves to attend the stated religious services held by the chaplain, when possible, and to aid him in his work to our utmost by upholding both the practice and profession of religion.

VI. As our only design is improvement in practical religion in the present relations we sustain to each other, we will ignore our peculiar theological differences, and uniting on the broad platform of Christian Charity and brotherly love, require no other test of fellowship than an expressed desire to join with us & a willingness to subscribe to these regulations.

The paper bears date of September 12, 1863, and has twenty-nine signatures—twelve Methodists, five Baptists, two Episcopal, one Lutheran, one Presbyterian, and the rest express no church preference.

Note has been taken in passing through the minutes of the death during the war period of some of the best known Methodist pioneers in Texas. Full biographical notices of some of these have been given in previous chapters; but these and some others, including a few

prominent laymen, merit a further word as they come to the end of their labors. Says J. E. Carnes, editor of the *Advocate*, in an article reporting the Texas Conference sessions of 1860:

At night the nestor of the Conference, Robert Alexander, preached the funeral of the sainted young Hubert, who fell during the year at Bastrop. He had seen the boy converted, inducted the young man into the Conference, and now arose to tell that he has gone to heaven and how he got there. What a sight it was—that vast sea of humanity swelling with emotion under the potent words of this pioneer preacher. Alexander is an engine of vast stroke, and when the hull of his subject is big enough for him “one would think the deep to be hoary.” His allusions to Ruter, Fowler and others of his compeers were irresistible. Everybody wept, and nearly everybody shouted.

While I write at the hospitable home of Bro. Peel Father Kenney is looking up his text for the funeral of Father Haynie. In ten minutes I am to be listening to one pioneer telling of the departure of another for the better country. The fountain of my tears begins to grow uneasy in the anticipation. All unconscious of my occasional glances the Old Man Eloquent of the Texas ministry is looking into a volume of Clarke’s Commentaries which once belonged to Ruter, or picking up a hymn book. I hope he may find the right text and the best hymn in the book. The bell rings and we rise to go.

Haynie was of a type rare in his day, and still scarcer to-day. “John Haynie was my father’s pastor in the early days of the Austin church,” writes O. T. Hotchkiss, late secretary of the Texas Conference, “and was much loved and honored, and was considered one of the most useful members of the Conference. He often did and said the unexpected, and was a strong defender of his church, and other religious pugilists found in him a foeman worthy of their steel. I have heard my father tell often of an incident at his table when a minister of another church was made to beat a hasty retreat. Bro. Haynie was then pastor of the church in Austin, and with

other ministers of the town was invited to supper by my father. While at the table Mr. Haynie complained of the difficulties of his work, and the little success he was having, and said how much discouraged he was sometimes, when the preacher of another church said: 'Come over and join us, and you will get along so much better and have an easier time.' Mr. Haynie turned on him and as quick as thought said, 'I know I am not worth much to my church, and I am often discouraged, and sometimes feel very much backslidden, but I haven't backslid near far enough to go into your church.'

A witness of the scene, H. S. Thrall, thus describes Haynie's last appearance at conference:

At the Conference at LaGrange in November, 1859, John Haynie, then in feeble health, and suffering from paralysis, was carried into the Conference hall to look for the last time upon his brethren. Besides the members of the Conference present, the venerable Jesse Hord was there to ask that his name be transferred to the West Texas (then the Rio Grande) Conference. Father Thomson and his sister, Mrs. Kerr, who had been present at the organization in 1840, were also there. (Both died soon afterward.) When the venerable Haynie, surrounded by so many veterans of the cross in Texas, pronounced the word "Farewell," it was such a spectacle as those who witnessed it can never forget. He died August 20, 1860, and his excellent wife did not long survive him.

Henry D. Hubert, the young man referred to in connection with Alexander's funeral sermon above, died at Bastrop in October, 1860. M. C. Robertson, who had been a useful member of the East Texas Conference for seven years, died in August, 1860. James C. Wilson, who had had a short but brilliant career in the Texas Conference, died in February, 1861. An Englishman by birth, he came to Texas and settled in Brazoria County in 1837. He volunteered for service against Mexico in an expedition following General Woll's raid into Texas



in 1842, and he became one of the Mier prisoners who landed in a Mexican prison. He made his escape and returned to Texas, after which he spent several years in the service of the state. The county of Wilson was named for him. Byron S. Carden, who had transferred from the Arkansas Conference to Texas in 1854, died in January, 1862. William A. Shegog, who had come from the Alabama Conference in 1860, died in 1864. The closing year of the war marked the close of the earthly careers of three servants of the church with whom we became acquainted in our earlier chapters. William Craig, a local preacher, but who had served intermittently as a supply since 1841, died in 1865. Daniel Carl died in Victoria County in August, 1865, in his fifty-seventh year. As we have seen, he was among the first to receive license to preach in Texas, this under Littleton Fowler, and in 1839, before the Texas Conference was organized, he had gone up with John Haynie and others to the Mississippi Conference for admission on trial. And the Church in Texas never had a more loyal or faithful son. "Daniel Carl," says his memoir, "was a man of genial temper, of unsullied reputation and strict integrity. . . . He was an able expounder of the Holy Scriptures, and a faithful administrator of Church discipline. After more than a quarter of century of labor his toil ends, and his mortal remains sleep in hope of a better resurrection in Victoria cemetery, on the banks of the beautiful Guadalupe."

John Wesley Kenney died on January 9, 1865, after battling many months with pulmonary trouble. Although his official relation to the Church for more than thirty years had been that of local preacher, yet during that time he contributed as much perhaps to the founding and upbuilding of Methodism in Texas as any man in the regular ranks. Says his memoir: "There was scarcely a neighborhood between the Trinity and San Antonio rivers which he did not visit, often spending weeks together away from home. When Bro. Alexander arrived

here as a missionary Bro. Kenney traveled with him sometimes for six or seven weeks, assisting in protracted meetings. He was often sent for to dedicate churches, and preach special sermons, and attend camp- and protracted meetings at distant points." Thrall, who was a contemporary, and who often, as he says, enjoyed the splendid hospitality of Kenney's home, writes: "He was an able expounder of Methodist doctrine. A Baptist preacher having stirred up a controversy on that subject at Bastrop, Mr. Kenney went up there and preached one sermon that settled the Baptist controversy for ten years in that section of country. So a sermon of his on apostolic succession settled that controversy in the minds of hundreds who heard it at Brenham, Independence, Chappell Hill, Anderson, and other places. Whenever and wherever he preached crowds flocked to his ministry, and his popularity continued unabated as long as he was able to occupy the pulpit." Kenney was readmitted into the traveling connection, which he had left in Illinois, at the session of the Texas Conference in 1842, but at the end of the year again dropped into the local ranks. In 1860 he was again admitted into the Texas Conference, and placed on the superannuated roll.

A name which appropriately fits in here is that of John Rabb, who died near Austin in June, 1861, a layman to whom attaches more than ordinary interest in our history. Rabb was one of the first settlers on the Colorado, in Fayette County. He was the first to join the church at the noted Kenney-Stephenson camp-meeting in 1834, and from that time until his death John Rabb was a powerful force for Methodism and righteousness in all the circles in which he moved. He was one of the founders of Ruttersville College. He was a liberal entertainer at camp-meetings and in his home, and is said to have pitched his tent at thirty-six camp-meetings. He erected one of the first saw- and grist-mills in western Texas, and this he dedicated to the Lord, and called it

“the Lord’s Mill.” Rabb sold out his large interests in Fayette County in 1860 and moved to Austin. The following advertisement appeared in the *Texas Christian Advocate* in 1860, which is so characteristic of Rabb that it is here inserted:

Mill For Sale—Can’t get the kind of miller I want and won’t have any other sort; too pushing a business for an old man; can’t get time to pray enough; too far from Church. I intend, by the will of God, to sell out and quit business, at least such pushing business. A good Flour, Corn and Shingling Mill (steam power), with a large quantity of Cedar Timber, and any amount of land, from one hundred to four thousand acres, for sale on reasonable terms. Situated ten miles north of Lagrange.

JOHN RABB.

Rabb was a Scotchman, of great energy and force of character. A son, George, entered the itinerant ministry, but died after one year. A daughter married William Reese, a member of the Texas Conference, and both she and her husband died of yellow fever at Houston, where Reese was stationed, in 1867.

We would like to make special mention of other worthy laymen, and from time to time we have done so in this history; but refer here in passing only to two more, who died during the period now under consideration. These are Dr. R. J. Swearingen, for many years prominently connected with our school interests at Chapell Hill, who died in 1861, and young Wm. Pinkney Downs, who died in 1860, and concerning whom, in an obituary notice in the *Advocate*, Robert Alexander says: “He was a son of Rev. W. W. and Henrietta Downs; died Sept. 8, 1860, near Waco, in his thirtieth year. He was a native of Georgia; raised in Alabama; educated at LaGrange College. Came to Texas in 1854, and until his death was a steward and Sunday school superintendent at Waco station. He left a widow and four

children." A son, who bears his name, has for many years been a pillar in the Church at Temple, and is prominent in the affairs of the Central Texas Conference.

We turn now to devote a few pages to affairs in the East Texas Conference during the war. As there are no war minutes of this conference extant we must depend for our information upon the reminiscences of two prominent members of that conference—J. W. Fields and John H. McLean. Dropping first into an old sketch-book written out by Fields, we quote—although it must be borne in mind, as it has perhaps been noted before in quotations from Fields, that he is somewhat splenetic in his temper:

Marshall Conference (1861): Bishop Early presided. The bishop either from dotage or supposed ignorance or inability of the Conference, assumed to be the Conference. Much dissatisfaction with the Conference and spectators with his manner of presiding—secret whisperings of "Iron Wheel" & c. I always want to respect our Bishops; but they must also respect my rights & feelings. The Conference closed without anything remarkable, more than the board retained the Mission fund on hand so as to be able to meet its own drafts. The Bishop was violently opposed to this measure I warmly advocated it. Time proved that I was right. In a few months Nashville was in the hands of the enemy & if we had sent our funds hither would never have seen them again.

At this session I was returned to the District (Palestine). Commenced work in the usual way, but in a few months half the preachers of the District had volunteered and gone to the Army, and I was much troubled to supply their places.

In April our Genl Conference was to convene at New Orleans. I was one of the chosen delegates of our Conference and was preparing to start when news reached us from Bishop Andrew that the time of meeting was postponed on account of threatened invasion & attack on the city. Wise policy If we had met & remained the usual time we should all have been taken prisoners. And probably would have fared poorly, as they seem to have much spleen at our sort.

In April went to Shreveport to lay in a few supplies for

my family. On my return home found Bro Tunnell (a young man I had taken to live with me) ready to leave in the Army. This left me in a bad fix for cultivating my little crop. Finances low—great scarcity of money for the past two years—trying to provide food for my family & serve the Church on almost nothing—borrowing money at 10&12 per cent in order to serve the Church. Sold a farm in Kaufman county in order to pay out & supply myself with a negro fellow. Negro proved to be untrustworthy. Soon sold him and ate him up as everything in the eating line advanced to such rates as the war progressed that a preacher's salary would not furnish half his supplies.

Crockett Conference (1862): No Bishop being present, Bro R. S. Finley was chosen President and presided to the entire satisfaction of the Conference. Three of our number had died during the year. Some yet remaining in the Army as chaplains, though the majority had returned and were ready for work. And these sudden ins & outs of the preachers have made decidedly a bad impression much rather had I for the credit of the Conf & Church that they had never entered. I should have been in the Army as Chaplain if health had permitted. And in the Chaplaincy, in my opinion, is the only capacity that a minister of the Gospel ought ever to enter the Army. God who called him to preach never uncalled him so far as to swallow up that call in official or private in ranks. . . . At this Conference I was placed on Tyler & Garden Valley Circuit. Went to work as usual. But owing to the great drain by the war of the best portion of our male membership, I could do but little.

While encountering none the less all the poverty and hardships of the war period, the tone of J. H. McLean is better. Fields wrote in the midst of things. Dr. McLean, looking back from a serene and comfortable old age, remembers those hard days of his youthful ministry with more satisfaction. "I was read out to Rusk station as my first charge, R. S. Finley, presiding elder, he says, referring to 1860. "To reach my charge I travelled by stage all day and night from Marshall to Rusk, and just at daybreak the stage driver sounded his bugle as a signal of his coming. As we drove on the public square the



first object that met my sight was 'Lincoln hung in effigy,' who later proved to be a lively corpse." Continuing, he says—this from his published "Reminiscences":

Being a single man, my salary for the year was fixed by the discipline at \$150. . . . I had been in charge but a few months before the angry clouds of war began to rise, and preparations being made for the fearful conflict that was soon to ensue. In the late spring a company was formed. It was composed of the flower of the community. It was a memorable and impressive sight when they took formal leave of loved ones and started for the field of battle, many never to return. . . .

From this Conference [Marshall, 1861] I was sent to Sherman station, about 180 miles distant. Brother Binkley preceded me in that station. He was the first pastor and I the second. He had served two years, then the time limit. . . . At Marshall Binkley bought a buggy, the first he ever owned, and kindly offered me a seat to Sherman, which I thankfully accepted, it being my first experience in buggy riding. After a hard drive of four and a half days we reached Sherman. . . . Socially and politically the communities of Marshall and Rusk, and the community of Sherman, were not altogether harmonious on the war question. The population of the first two communities were from the Gulf States principally, the last from such border States as Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri and Kansas, and a preponderance of sentiment favored the Union. This placed me in a new atmosphere politically, and made me realize the necessity of being considerate of the rights and sentiments of all, that my ministry might not be lost to any on political grounds. My paramount business was to look after and promote the spiritual interests of the people, the whole people. I was the servant of all. . . . Many of the best citizens of the community did not favor secession, but when the State acted they could not array themselves against their own people, and they accepted the situation as gracefully as possible. It appears, however, that in an adjacent county, Cooke, there was a secret organization that plotted against their own people, those that sympathized with the Confederacy, and went so far as to waylay two Confederate Colonels, Bill Young and Jim Bourland, killing Colonel Young, but missed Colonel Bourland. These were two of the most promi-

ment citizens of North Texas and resided in Cooke County. The country was much aroused over the dastardly act. Colonel Bourland and Captain Jim Young, son of Colonel Young, at the head of their respective forces, began to ferret out the plot, and finally arrested, tried, convicted and executed forty-eight members of the band. Good men were selected to act on a committee in the capacity of jurors, of the number two were Methodist preachers, J. N. Hamill and J. R. Bellamy, both prominent members of the East Texas Conference. The execution took place at Gainesville, and the forty-eight were hanged the same day and on the same limb.

Referring to this situation, Rev. Ed. F. Bates in his "History of Denton County," says: "In the spring of 1862 it was discovered that there was a secret organization among the Union sympathizers, and that they had concerted plans to fight their way through to the Union lines. At that time it was charged against them that their plan was to fight their way through on a selected date, to kill men, women and children as they went, and to use the torch freely." He says that the organization existed in Cooke, Denton and Wise counties, being strongest in Cooke County. He makes no reference to the killing of Col. Young. But we are told: "The people of Cooke county suffered the reported diabolical purposes of the secret order to inflame their passions, dethrone their reason, and influence their judgment to such an extent that they rose up en masse and hanged about twenty-five men. They had some kind of military trial, but the fate of these men rested on the proof of their membership in this order, and Mr. Chance, who had sought membership in the order as a spy, was the witness. In Wise County they acted more deliberately, and were not wrought up. A trial commission of fifty of the best men of that county was organized and presided over by Rev. William Bellamy [James R. Bellamy] a Methodist preacher, and the then presiding elder of this western district of the East Texas Conference." Five men

were hanged in Wise County; several arrests were made in Denton County, but only one prisoner died, and he at the hands of an infuriated citizen.

Returning to Dr. McLean's narrative, we find him in 1863-64 at Jefferson, at that time and for several years afterward one of the leading cities of the state. "Jefferson is where I first met Doctor, later, Bishop Marvin," he writes, "which I esteem one of the greatest privileges and blessings of my life." Concerning this new preacher, now first introduced to Texas Methodism, he says:

I had heard of his being in the vicinity of Shreveport, Louisiana, and gave him a cordial invitation to come to Jefferson and hold a protracted meeting for me, which he kindly consented to do. He came on horseback, was dressed in a suit of brown homespun jeans, the stirrup leathers had worn through the inside of his pantlegs from riding on horseback. His coat had broadcloth cuffs and collar, the most becoming suit I ever saw on him, more so than the broadcloth suit presented to him a few years later when he was elected Bishop. . . . He preached for me three weeks; we ate, slept, visited and worshipped together; and later we were travelling companions for three or four weeks, and such fellowship and association was the privilege of a lifetime. The meeting was a great success. He preached seven consecutive sermons from the same text, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Dr. Marvin had left the chief pulpit in St. Louis in the spring of 1862 and set out on horseback to make his way through the lines to the General Conference at New Orleans. The conference was postponed, but Dr. Marvin, whose sympathies were strongly with the South, preferred to remain within the Southern lines during the war; and this he did, ministering to the Confederate armies and occasionally to the civil population as opportunities came. Besides the meeting which he held at Jefferson in 1864 he preached often at Marshall during

the same year. In February, 1865, the pastor at Marshall, C. L. Hamill, died, and at the request of the church the presiding elder appointed Dr. Marvin pastor to fill out the year. In the fall of that year he attended the East Texas Conference at Paris, and also the Texas Conference at Waco; after which he returned to Louisiana. In the spring of 1866 he took a boat on Red River for the General Conference at New Orleans, although he was not a delegate. He arrived in New Orleans to find that he had been elected bishop the day before, and had arrived just in time for ordination, although after four years of roughing it in the Confederate armies and "in Texas," as was said, his personal appearance was not considered suitable for gracing the episcopal office. Says Bishop Paine: "On his first appearance in the Conference room after his arrival I saw him come in and take a seat on the rear bench in the corner of the church. His attire was common and worn, and his hair was untrimmed, and his beard long and covering his face. I called Bro. Doty to me at the platform and told him to take Bishop Marvin to the barber-shop and clothing store, and have him in order for the ordination next day. Mr. Doty reported as follows: On his arrival in the city he (Marvin) put up at a boarding house. He was very poorly clad, and I took him down into the city and dressed him in a bishop's suit at a cost of sixty-five dollars. I then proposed that we go to the barber-shop, as Bishop Paine had suggested. This he pleasantly declined." At any rate Bishop Marvin was duly ordained next day, and in the assignment of bishops he was designated to hold the Texas conferences in the fall of 1866.

The Fifth General Conference met in the city of New Orleans on April 4, 1866, and its sessions continued until May 3, all of them crowded with business. No General Conference had been held since 1858, and the ravages of war had left all the interests of the Church in a sadly dilapidated state, while the opening of a new era called

for much new ecclesiastical machinery to be placed in operation.

This General Conference had work to do. The Publishing House at Nashville was in ruins, and all the publishing interests demoralized. The Mission Board was \$60,000 in debt, and with practically no income to maintain existing work. Most of the educational institutions of the Church had been closed, except a few for girls. The war had ground up the "seed corn"—the young men of military age. The colored membership of the Church was practically adrift. Of the 207,766 colored members in 1860, there remained at the close of the war only 48,742. The distracted condition of the country had prevented anything like general episcopal supervision of the interests of the Church, and besides three of the five bishops—Soule, Andrew and Early—were worn out, and ready for retirement, which they were granted at this General Conference. But if the problems of reconstruction were gigantic, there were gigantic men in those days to cope with them. One finds such figures as the following composing the General Conference at New Orleans: Leroy M. Lee, David S. Doggett, James A. Duncan, John C. Granberry, Paul Whitehead, Charles F. Deems, Lovick Pierce, Joseph S. Key, Simon Peter Richardson, Holland N. McTyeire, Thomas O. Summers, William M. Wightman, R. K. Hargrove, John C. Keener, Linus Parker, John B. McFerrin, John W. Hanner, A. L. P. Green, Robert A. Young, Andrew Hunter, and O. P. Fitzgerald—to say nothing of the delegations from Texas. The Texas representatives who sat in this conference were the following: East Texas—W. H. Hughes, J. B. Tullis, Levi R. Dennis, J. M. Binkley, J. W. P. McKenzie and W. A. Shook. From the Texas Conference: Robert Alexander, Wm. McK. Lambden, Thomas Stanford. W. G. Veal, Asbury Davidson, I. G. John, J. W. Whipple, J. W. Phillips. From the Rio Grande Conference: Jesse Boring and John W. DeVilbiss.



A situation immediately following the close of the war increased the problems confronting our Church. Hundreds of churches had been burned or dismantled, or converted to other uses, as hospitals or storehouses. This wreckage was soon repaired; but when the war closed and military rule was established throughout the South, many southern preachers, who were regarded as "disloyal," were ousted from their pulpits, and their places filled by preachers from the North. Bishop Ames, of the Northern Methodist Church, came into the South bearing an order from the Secretary of War authorizing him to fill Southern Methodist pulpits with preachers from his own Church, and the military powers were instructed to enforce these appointments wherever necessary. The Carondelet Street Church in New Orleans, our leading church in that city, had been filled in this way, and the intruder had vacated his place only a short time before the assembling of our General Conference in that church. In Texas there were a few instances of Northern intrusion in Southern churches under Federal protection, as at Galveston.<sup>4</sup>

A summary of the work done by the General Conference at New Orleans, much of which was of far-reaching importance in the history of our Church, may be given in few words. Class-meeting attendance was made voluntary, and ceased to be compulsory, as it had been before; and from that time class-meetings began to decline.

<sup>4</sup> Extracts from letter from R. W. Kennon, P. E., to O. M. Addison, dated at Houston, June 4, 1865: "I drop you a line upon the subject of saving our church at Galveston. Baldwin, the appointee of the Conference, has not returned from his trip after Bibles. The Federals will take possession of the city in about a week—there will be Yankee Methodist preachers perhaps with the first expedition, and if we have no preacher in charge of the church he will walk into it. Now what I want is for you to go down to Galveston take charge of the church—be the pastor there when the Yankees come. I will write from here down to the stewards on the subject. We may or may not unite with the Northern Methodists, but I think we ought to protect our interests until the time comes. You had better go down at once. I will furnish you with a certificate of your appointment to that charge."

The six months' probation period for membership in the Church was abolished. The pastoral term was increased from two to four years. The District Conference was recommended, but not provided for by legal enactment until four years later; but dating from 1866 the District Conference came into very general use, and became one of the popular meetings in our Church. Perhaps the most important single action taken at New Orleans was the inauguration of the movement admitting lay representation in the councils of the Church. The question was passed up to the annual conferences, where it found overwhelming approval. It is interesting to note that the delegation from the Texas Conference voted in favor of the adoption of lay representation, while the East Texas delegates voted with the opposition. In the elections of bishops, William M. Wightman and Enoch M. Marvin were elected on the first ballot; David S. Doggett and Holland N. McTyeire were elected on the third ballot. A. H. Redford was put in charge of the publishing interests; to John B. McFerrin was assigned the task of rehabilitating the missionary work. The mission debt of \$60,000 was distributed among the various annual conferences, \$4000 of the amount being allotted to the Texas Conference, and \$1500 to the East Texas. Thomas O. Summers was elected "General Editor," which included the *Christian Advocate* at Nashville, and editors were elected for the conference organs. I. G. John was elected editor of the *Texas Christian Advocate*. In laying out new conferences Texas was given a new one—the Northwest Texas—and another was made possible by the division of the East Texas Conference, which occurred the following year, the northern portion taking the name of the Trinity Conference. This later took the name of North Texas Conference. The name of the Rio Grande Conference was changed to West Texas Conference. So the field of Texas Methodism was plotted very

much as it has come down to our day. The few changes occurring in more recent times need not be noted here.

This brings us to the concluding stage of our work—the “round” of the annual conferences in the fall of 1866. The first one to be held was the Northwest Texas, which met in Waxahachie on September 26, Bishop Marvin in charge, Fountain P. Ray secretary. The building in which this conference was held was erected in 1856, and was dedicated the same year by Bishop Paine. It was used as a place of worship for forty-seven years. It stands to-day, on its original location, on East Franklin Street, one of the “oldest inhabitants,” no longer used as a church, but has been converted into a boarding house. The writer happens to possess the minutes of the first session of the Northwest Texas Conference, which bound together with the proceedings of the next three sessions, make all told a pamphlet of sixteen pages, including four pages of advertising. Evidently this was before the day of the typewriter and of long-winded reports from an endless number of boards and committees. It was indeed a “reconstructive” era, but the few conference committees did not dream that they were called upon to outline a policy for the “reconstruction of the world,” further than the simple process of giving it the gospel.

Theodore M. Price, John F. Neal and Milton Jones were admitted on trial. J. P. Mussett was admitted into full connection. And of the original members of that conference, or of those admitted on trial, the last survivor, John F. Neal, died early in 1924. J. P. Mussett, the last survivor of the original full members, died in 1921. Jerome B. Annis, O. M. Addison, Henry W. South, Thomas Marshall, James Rice and John R. White were received by transfer. The following are the membership statistics of the districts composing the conference:

## WACO DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Waco Station.....	203	.....	4
Waco Circuit *.....			
East Waco *.....			
Belton.....	141	40	3
Cameron *.....			
San Andrew's *.....			
White Rock *.....			
Georgetown.....	150	25	2
	494	65	9

## LAMPASAS DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Lampasas Circuit *.....			
Gatesville *.....			
Palo Pinto.....	180	1	4
Camp Colorado.....	30		
Stephenville.....	199	8	2
San Saba *.....			
Llano *.....			
Meridian.....	150	5	2
	559	14	8

\* No report.

## FORT WORTH DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Fort Worth Circuit.....	127	42	3
Weatherford.....	218	6	2
Acton.....	143	.....	4
Grand View.....	340	.....	8
Waxahachie.....	150	.....	5
Waxahachie Circuit.....	238	.....	10
Waxahachie Colored Charge.....	.....	80	1
Hillsboro.....	211	.....	4
	1427	128	37

## SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Springfield Circuit.....	308	105	9
Owensville.....	132	.....	4
Port Sullivan.....	75	.....	1
Marlin.....	152	.....	2
Fairfield.....	203	64	3
Centreville.....	170	75	5
Corsicana.....	300	75	7
Village Creek.....	50	.....	.....
	1390	319	31



And then come the appointments, in which it will be noted that the Fort Worth district is dropped and the Waxahachie district takes its place.

## WACO DISTRICT

L. B. WHIPPLE, P. E.

Waco Station, John Carpenter.

Waco Circuit, to be supplied.

White Rock, J. P. Sneed, Isaac N. Mullens.

Belton, John W. Ledbetter.

Georgetown, J. Fred. Cox.

Cameron, O. M. Addison, J. H. Addison, Sup.

Marlin, J. P. Mussett.

Waco Colored Charge, to be supplied.

## LAMPASAS DISTRICT

JAMES M. JOHNSON, P. E.

Lampasas Circuit, to be supplied.

San Saba, Theodore M. Price.

Palo Pinto Mission, Milton Jones.

Sulphur Springs, William Monk.

Stephenville Mission, to be supplied.

Meridian Mission, Peter W. Gravis.

Bosqueville, George W. Graves.

## WAXAHACHIE DISTRICT

W. G. VEAL, P. E.

Waxahachie Station, Thomas Stanford, F. P. Ray, Sup.

Waxahachie Circuit, Jerome B. Annis, S. S. Yarbrow, Sup.

Hillsboro, R. B. Womack.

Grand View, to be supplied, John Powell, Sup.

Acton, Jesse M. Boyd.

Weatherford, John F. Neal.

Fort Worth, James M. Jones.

## SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

JOHN S. MCCARVER, P. E.

Springfield Circuit, William M. Mathes

Corsicana, S. C. Littlepage.

Village Creek Mission, Milton H. Jones.

Fairfield, Thomas G. Gilmore.

Clear Creek Mission, Drury Womack.

Centre ville, Thomas Whitworth.

Owensville, Jackson L. Crabb.

Port Sullivan Station, A. L. P. Green.

Port Sullivan College, J. O. Church.

Texas Christian Advocate, William McK. Lambden, Agent.

The East Texas Conference met at Marshall on October 10, Bishop Marvin president, William P. Petty secretary. M. M. Sample, James R. Middleton, J. O. B. Richardson, Milton G. McAlister, J. C. Smith, Madison Thompson, and Samuel Weaver were admitted on trial. John N. Hamill, T. W. Mitchell, Daniel S. Watkins, and W. C. Young were received by transfer.

In answer to the question, "What preachers have died during the year?" we have, "Samuel A. Williams. No memoir." For more than a quarter of a century Samuel A. Williams had served the Church in this section, on circuits, stations and districts; he had many times been chosen president of the conference, in the absence of the bishop, and more than once he had sat in General

Conference; and yet he is allowed to pass from the ranks of his brethren without a word of praise or farewell. Williams belongs in the same company with Alexander, Fowler, Hord, Sneed and a few others who laid the foundations of Methodism in Texas. He was born in North Carolina in 1810. The family moved to Tennessee when he was a boy, and here he was converted and went into the Church. He entered the Tennessee Conference in 1834. In 1838 he responded to the call for missionaries in Texas, and in December of that year we find him present in the little council with Fowler, Hord and Strickland, held at San Augustine, when the work in Texas was apportioned among the few who had arrived, or were soon to come. Williams was assigned to San Augustine, which included Nacogdoches and Shelbyville. He received appointments regularly thereafter, all in the eastern portion of Texas, until 1863, when he took the superannuate relation. Williams was described by one who knew him<sup>5</sup> as smooth in temperament, affable and genial in manners, and always beloved by old and young alike wherever he was known. He was a strong and eloquent preacher, at times overwhelming in power. As an exhorter he is said to have been without an equal in his day, and few could excel him in singing. "On one occasion," we are told, "he was preaching at a camp-meeting near Cook's Fort, in Cherokee County. It was Sabbath at 11 o'clock, and his text was Heb. xi:16, on looking for a better country. He described the journeys people were making, from Tennessee to Texas, and on to California, looking for a better country. He was dwelling upon the beauties of California, as they had been described to him, when a stentorian voice was raised in the congregation which asked: 'Is thar any beavers over thar—if thar is I want to go with you.' The congregation was shocked and the preacher thrown off his balance. He faltered and failed, and the service was closed. The voice

<sup>5</sup> E. L. Armstrong, in T. C. A., 1890.

was that of a half-demented man who spent his time in trapping beaver." No man was held in higher esteem among his brethren, though his quiet disposition kept him from being so widely known as some of them. If he ever wrote anything for publication this writer has been unable to find it. He died in 1866, and was buried at San Augustine.

The minutes of the East Texas Conference for 1866 give no detailed membership statistics, only the totals. These are: White members, 5955; colored members, 1120; local preachers, 75, besides 11 colored. The appointments were as follows:

## SAN AUGUSTINE DISTRICT

J. R. BURKE, P. E.

San Augustine Circuit, John C. Woolam.

Jasper, Daniel S. Watkins.

Newton, A. D. Parks.

Hemphill, Samuel Weaver.

Melrose, John Patillo.

Shelbyville, I. O. B. Richardson.

Douglas, J. R. Middleton, I. W.

Overall, Sup.

## MARSHALL DISTRICT

L. R. DENNIS, P. E.

Marshall Station, to be supplied.

Marshall Circuit, John S. Mathis.

Elysian Fields, L. C. Crouse, B. A.

Wooten, Sup.

Carthage, J. R. Bellamy.

Henderson Station, N. W. Burks.

Henderson Circuit, G. W. Cottingham.

Mount Enterprise, Neill Brown.

Smith, L. P. Lively.

Marshall Colored Charge, to be supplied.

## JEFFERSON DISTRICT

RICHARD LANE, P. E.

Jefferson Station, R. W. Thompson.

Linden Circuit, A. W. Goodjion.

Dangerfield, Thomas B. Norwood.

Sulphur Springs, J. N. Hamill.

Coffeeville, W. P. Petty, J. T. P.

Irvine, Sup.

Gilmer, H. D. Palmer.

Quitman, J. S. Terry.

Boston, A. C. McDougal.

## KAUFMAN DISTRICT

MATT H. NEELEY, P. E.

Sulphur Bluff Circuit, W. R. Davis, J. H. Lowe, Sup.

Ladonia, Calvin J. Cock.

Springville, J. B. Rabb.

Canton, William L. Carleton.

Garden Valley, J. W. Fields.

Kaufman, W. A. Shook.

## PARIS DISTRICT

JOHN W. PINER, P. E.

Paris Station, Thomas M. Smith.

Paris Circuit, L. B. Ellis.

Honey Grove, Jesse H. Walker.

Clarksville and McKenzie, to be supplied.

Savannah, Milton G. McAlister.

McKenzie College, J. W. P. McKenzie, President.

Paris Female Institute, Jas. Graham, Principal.

## SHERMAN DISTRICT

J. M. BINKLEY, P. E.

Sherman Station, John H. McLean.

Sherman Circuit, T. W. Mitchell.

Gainesville, Green Boyd.

Fish Creek, to be supplied.

Bonham, William M. Robins.

Greenville, Wm. P. Reed, H. W. Cumming, Sup.

## DALLAS DISTRICT

WILLIAM H. HUGHES, P. E.

Dallas Circuit, William C. Young.

Scyene, James P. Rogers.

Rockwall, J. L. Angell.

McKinney, John W. Chalk.

Denton, William E. Bates.

Grapevine, J. C. Smith.

## PALESTINE DISTRICT

JOHN ADAMS, P. E.

Palestine and Mound Prairie Station, F. J. Patillo.

Palestine Circuit, to be supplied.

Rusk Station, Jefferson Shook.

Rusk Circuit, Samuel Lynch.

Jacksonville, to be supplied.

Tyler Station, William Witcher.

Athens Circuit, M. C. Simpson.

Kickapoo, to be supplied.

## CROCKETT DISTRICT

JOSEPH BOND, P. E.

Crockett Circuit, F. M. Stovall.

Sumter, to be supplied.

Livingston, James H. Neeley.

Liberty, Edward P. Rogers.

Orange, Madison Thompson.

Woodville, to be supplied.

Homer, M. M. Sample.

J. B. Tullis, Agent for the Texas Christian Advocate and Book Depository.

R. S. Finley, Agent for McKenzie College.

R. M. Kirby and Robert M. Leaton, transferred to West Texas Conference.

The Texas Conference met at Galveston on October 24, Bishop Marvin presiding and Daniel Morse secretary. No one was admitted on trial and no one received by transfer. The minutes take note of the death of J. H. D. Moore, a member of the conference since 1852; of Thomas F. Windsor, a member since 1853; and George Little, an error in name, evidently meant for George Tittle, whom we have known a few years back as a pioneer on the northwestern frontier of the conference. He soon dropped out of sight, and we learn from his brief memoir that in 1855 he became disordered in mind. During the war he partially recovered, and entered the Confederate army, but died toward the close of the war in a Confederate hospital.

The statistical reports are here given, very incomplete. Then follow the appointments.

## GALVESTON DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Galveston Station.....	150		
Houston.....	190		
Harmony Grove.....	58	4	
Columbia.....	70		
Richmond.....	70		
San Felipe.....	55	12	
	593	16	

## CHAPPELL HILL DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Chappell Hill Station.....			
Washington.....			
Washington and Rock Island.....	60		
Independence.....	66	93	
Bellville.....	167	197	
Stone's Chapel.....			
Hempstead.....	20		
Anderson.....	156	50	
Plantersville.....	143	172	
	606	513	

## HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Huntsville.....	100	61	
Cold Springs.....	65	40	
Danville.....	170	25	
Montgomery.....	135		
Spring Creek.....	50	20	
West Liberty.....	77	2	
	577	148	

## CALDWELL DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Caldwell.....	150	10	
Lexington.....	113		
Boonville.....	162	32	
Union Hill.....	140		
Rutersville.....	111	90	
Post Oak Island.....	120		
	796	132	



## AUSTIN DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Austin Station.....	77		
Austin Circuit.....			
Bastrop.....			
Cedar Creek.....	132	53	
Winchester.....			
La Grange.....			
Navidad.....			
Columbus.....			
	209	53	

## GERMAN DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Bellville.....			
Richmond.....			
Industry.....	115		
Bastrop.....	105		
Brushy.....	16		
Galveston.....			
Houston.....	81		
	407		

## FREDERICKSBURG DISTRICT

	White Members	Colored Members	Local Preachers
Fredericksburg Circuit.....	53		
Beaver Creek.....	143		
New Braunfels.....	125		
New Fountain Mission.....	52		
Yorktown and Goliad Mission.....	20		
	393		

## GALVESTON DISTRICT

R. ALEXANDER, P. E.

Galveston Station, to be supplied.  
Galveston City Mission, to be supplied.

Galveston Sailors' Charge, H. V. Philpott.

Galveston Male Academy, L. H. Baldwin.

Houston Station, William Rees.

Houston Circuit, to be supplied.

Cedar Bayou, to be supplied.

Editor Texas Christian Advocate  
and Agent of Book Depository,  
Isaac G. John; Traveling  
Agent, B. D. Dashiell.

## COLUMBUS DISTRICT

J. W. B. ALLEN, P. E.

Columbus and Osage, Wesley Smith.

Navidad Circuit, C. W. Thomas.

Alleyton and Eagle Lake, to be supplied.

Egypt, Thomas W. Glass.

Matagorda, to be supplied.

Columbia and Brazoria, James K. Tansey.

Oyster Creek, to be supplied.

Richmond and Harrisburg, George V. Ridley.

San Felipe and Hartsville, A. McKinney.

Union Chapel, James A. Light.

## CHAPPELL HILL DISTRICT

Ivy H. Cox, P. E.

Chappell Hill Station, B. T. Kavanaugh.

Bellville Circuit, R. W. Kennon.

Brenham Station, F. C. Wilkes.

Washington and Rock Island, U. C. Spencer.

Andersonville and Plantersville, J. M. Turner.

Navasoto and Courtney, H. M. Glass.

Hempstead, to be supplied.

Stone's Chapel, to be supplied.

Soule University and Chappell Hill  
Female College, W. H. Seat,  
Agent.

## GERMAN MISSION DISTRICT

F. VORDENBIEMEN, P. E.

Houston Mission, John Pruenzing.

Bellville, to be supplied.

Industry, Julius Gliess.

Bastrop, C. A. Grote.

Victoria, to be supplied.

New Braunfels Circuit, John A. Schofer.

New Fountain Mission, to be supplied.

Yorktown and Goliad, August Tamke.

Fredericksburg and Cherry Springs,  
F. Mummil.

Llano Circuit, Conrad Pluncke.

## HUNTSVILLE DISTRICT

J. M. WESSON, P. E.

Huntsville Station, R. T. Heffin.

Waverly and Danville, T. B. Buckingham.

Cold Springs, A. W. Smith.

Montgomery and Martha Chapel, G. S. Sandle.

Madisonville, to be supplied.

Spring Creek, to be supplied.

Andrew Female College, R. T. Heffin.

## CALDWELL DISTRICT

DANIEL MORSE, P. E.

Caldwell Circuit, G. W. Fleming.

Millican, M. H. Porter.

Lexington, to be supplied.

Post Oak Island, to be supplied.

Union Hill, W. G. Nelms.

Rutersville, to be supplied.

Brazos, to be supplied.

## AUSTIN DISTRICT

J. W. WHIPPLE, P. E.

Austin Station, J. W. Philips.

Bastrop, J. M. Whipple.

Austin Circuit, to be supplied.

Cedar Creek, to be supplied.

Winchester, F. L. Allen.

La Grange Station, Q. M. Meniffee.

The West Texas Conference convened at Seguin on November 7, Bishop Marvin in the chair, R. H. Belvin secretary. Curran M. Rogers was admitted on trial. Lucius M. McGehee, R. M. Kirby, J. G. Walker, Homer

S. Thrall and Robert M. Leaton were received by transfer. In answer to the question, "Who have located this year," we have the names of Jesse Boring, James E. Ferguson, and Thomas F. Cooke. Dr. Boring, as we have noted elsewhere, assumed charge of the medical department of Soule University. The medical school was located at Galveston, but its life as a department of Soule University was short. In 1868 Dr. Boring returned to Georgia.

In answer to the question, "What preachers have died during the year," the answer given is, "Nicholas H. Boring," and then comes the monotonous refrain, "No memoir." Nicholas H. Boring was a son of Dr. Jesse Boring, and in May, 1866, while the elder Boring was in attendance at General Conference at New Orleans, the son was killed in a railroad accident at Chappell Hill, and in the cemetery there he lies buried. So, on the whole, the sojourn in Texas of the distinguished Georgian, Dr. Jesse Boring, was largely shadowed with tragedy. His school enterprise in San Antonio was suspended on account of the war, and his home there was lost from the same cause. A home in Galveston was lost through defective title, and three of his children had found their graves in Texas—a daughter at Galveston, the son at Chappell Hill, and another at Luling.

James E. Ferguson had just finished one year as presiding elder on the Victoria district, but for some cause he located in 1866. He moved to Bell County, where he lived until his death in 1876. Ferguson was married in 1854 to Miss Fannie Fitzpatrick, of Houston, who survived him until very recent years. Five children, four sons and one daughter, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, one of the sons, James E. Ferguson, we need not be told, made his way to the governorship of Texas.

The membership statistics of the West Texas Conference were: White members, 2113; colored, 761; local

preachers, 36. And the list of appointments was as follows: <sup>6</sup>

## VICTORIA DISTRICT

JAMES W. COOLY, P. E.

Victoria, Port Lavaca, and Colored Charge, William T. Harris.  
Indianola and Colored Charge, Homer S. Thrall.  
Texana Circuit and Colored Charge, William R. D. Stockton.  
Boxville and Colored Charge, Thomas F. Cocke.  
Brushy and Colored Charge, Curran M. Rogers.  
Clinton and Colored Charge, James T. Gillett.  
Mission Valley and Colored Charge, Robert M. Leaton.

## GONZALES DISTRICT

ASBURY DAVIDSON, P. E.

Gonzales Station and Colored Charge, Buckner Harris.  
Thompsonville Circuit, R. M. Kirby.  
Moulton, John L. Harper.  
Hallettsville, A. A. Killough.  
Prairie Point, A. B. Duvall.

## SAN MARCOS DISTRICT

D. W. FLY, P. E.

San Marcos Circuit and Colored Charge, John S. Gillett.  
Lockhart and Colored Charge, Lucius M. McGehee, J. B. Whittenberg, Sup.  
Prairie Lea, A. J. Potter.  
Harris Chapel, to be supplied (by T. A. Lancaster.)  
Blanco to be supplied (by Samuel Johnson.)

## GOLIAD DISTRICT

THOMAS T. LEACH, P. E.

Goliad Station and Colored Charge, Solomon T. Bridges.

Helena Circuit and Colored Charge, E. Y. Seale.

Sandies and Colored Charge, H. A. Graves, Roswell Gillett, Sup.  
Sutherland's Springs Station, John S. McGee.  
Sutherland's Springs Colored Charge, to be supplied (by P. W. Hobbs.)  
Seguin Circuit and Colored Charge, Robert H. Belvin.  
Rancho and Colored Charge, Robert W. Pierce.

## SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

WILLIAM T. THORNBURG, P. E.

San Antonio Station, Jas. G. Walker.  
San Antonio Colored Charge, to be supplied.  
San Antonio Circuit, to be supplied (by T. A. Smith.)  
Kerrsville and Uvalde Mission, William J. Joyce.  
Cibola Circuit, Robert Blassengame.  
Cibola Colored Charge, Henderson S. Laferty.  
Pleasanton Mission, to be supplied.  
Agent of American Bible Society, J. W. DeVilbiss.

## CORPUS CHRISTI DISTRICT

O. A. FISHER, P. E.

Corpus Christi Station, to be supplied (by A. F. Cox.)  
Beeville Circuit, Thomas F. Rainey.  
Cummingsville and Colored Charge, E. G. Duvall.  
St. Mary's Mission, Thomas Myres.  
Oakville Circuit, A. M. Box.  
Brownsville, to be supplied.

I. H. Cox and G. W. Fleming, transferred to Texas Conference.

Comparing the membership statistics of all the Texas conferences as returned in 1866, the year following the close of the war, with those of 1860, the year before the

<sup>6</sup> In the printed minutes of all the conferences the names of charges and preachers are often mis-spelled; but, except in cases where errors are mainly typographical, the orthography of the minutes is followed.

war began, we find a great slump in numbers, although it was certainly not so great as the figures show, as the reports of 1866 were manifestly very incomplete. In 1860 there were reported 30,681 white members and probationers; 7451 colored members and probationers, and 461 local preachers. In 1866 the reports account for only 15,519 white members (the probationary feature having been abolished by the General Conference); 3269 colored members, and 256 local preachers—a reduction in all classes of about one-half. The membership of the entire Church was still further reduced by the setting off of the colored people into a separate organization. In the work of retrieving her heavy losses and in reforming her lines for new conquests it required another quadrennium for Southern Methodism to hit her stride. In Texas, where the damage of war was less, and to which state thousands now began to turn from the older states, to repair their broken fortunes and to start life anew, the Church went forward with a rapid and a steady growth, and within the next generation the Methodism of Texas is to outstrip that of any other state in the South. To trace the course of this progress for the next fifty years is a task worthy of a more brilliant pen than that which has so laboriously endeavored to portray the first half-century of our history. And it is to be hoped that someone will be moved to take up the story and carry it forward. In which case the wish is here expressed that such “future historian of Texas Methodism” may find among his brethren a wider interest in the subject and a larger co-operation in his labors than the present writer has enjoyed.



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